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WAYSIDE THOUGHTS;

BEING A SERIES OF DESULTORY ESSAYS ON EDUCATION;

BY

D'ARCY W. THOMPSON,

AUTHOR OF 'DAY-DREAMS OF A SCHOOLMASTER,' 'SALES ATTICI,' ETC. ETC.

Ἦτοι τὸ θρέψαι γ' ἐν βροτοῖσι πολλάκις
πλείω πορίζει φίλτρα τοῦ φῦσαι τέκνα.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM P. NIMMO.
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TO

MR. JOHN AMERY LOWELL,

AN ENEMY TO PREJUDICE,

A FRIEND OF PROGRESS AND ENLIGHTENMENT,

THE FOLLOWING ESSAYS,

READ BY REQUEST

AT THE LOWELL INSTITUTE, BOSTON, U.S.,

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I.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

PERFECT culture is fourfold: physical, mental, moral, and spiritual; and it is a holy thing, as being absolutely requisite for the full and comprehensive understanding of God's infinitely manifold revelations. A child in earliest infancy demands our undivided attention for the healthy nurture of his body; by and by, with no relaxation of our previous care, we may employ his senses —his eyes especially—to aid us in conveying mental impressions to his brain; gradually and imperceptibly, with no relaxation of our physical and mental training, we may bring home to our little charge simple and elementary rules of conduct and duty, drawn from his own or from alien rights to boy-properties and from the varied claims of the human or brute creatures around him to reverence, obedience, love,

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courtesy, kindness, and pity; and, finally, with a continuous development of our physical, mental, and moral culture, we may use the analogous relationships of parent, brother, sister, and companion, to lift up and expand the thoughts of the child to the conception of the stupendous but simple truths, that there is an universal Father, and that all mankind are brethren.

Thus our training, at its commencement, is partial and simple; as months or years advance, it becomes more and more complex; as new faculties come into play, new material on which to act must be supplied; as the faculties develop, the material must be increased or strengthened; when the organism is complete, we must furnish a training perfect in its four divisions, if we would secure for coming manhood the inestimable blessing of a *mens sana in corpore sano.*

By the exclusive development of his physical powers a man will degenerate into animalism. Mental speculations, carried on exclusively, or for their intrinsic rather than their relative values, are apt to fritter into subtle and impracticable problems. The mental discipline of scientific ethics must be called in to correct or supplement

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the warping influences of convention, and to tone down the extravagancies of sentiment. The over-developed spiritualism of a few is seldom fraught with advantage, is nearly always fraught with peril, to the many. It is a grand thing to be strong and healthy; it is a grander thing to be refined and wise; it is grander still to be good and holy; but the grandest of all conditions is to be at once healthy and wise and good. Such a trebly-blest condition may be impossible of achievement, or may be possible only for a favoured few. It is the goal, however, towards which in the race of life every man is bound to press forward. Nay, more; so peculiar are the regulations of our race-course, that each one competitor is bound to halt betimes and assist to the utmost all other competitors within his reach; and the joy and profit of victory to every one winner is multiplied and intensified by the numbers of those who share it with him.

Could we live perfectly isolated lives, we might expect to find the boundaries of free action so far extended as to admit of every man's being dirty, or miserable, or idle, or ignorant, according to his taste; but we are gregarious beings, and cannot by any effort attain to independence.

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Poverty is allowed to fester in the foul alleys of our great, overcrowded cities; and the poor man dies, and oftentimes in dying exacts, all unconsciously, a terrible retribution. The typhoid fevers that here and there have taken up a permanent abode are the gloomy but appropriate mementoes of suffering poverty and neglectful wealth. Do we—industrious, well-to-do, well-educated, respectable people—read with dismay concerning the prevalence in this or that neighbouring district of idleness, misery, crime, ignorance, or discontent? Let us, then, take ourselves to task, and consider whether, to teach ourselves more comfortably, we have closed the school-door against our poorer brethren; whether, to mount more rapidly or comfortably the social ladder, we have kicked in the face our neighbour as he followed; whether, to warm ourselves or our young ones, we have robbed alien nests of their twigs and straw. Of this we may be sure, that wherever in a land we find idleness, ignorance, vice, or discontent to prevail, either separately or conjointly, there is a sin in that land. We may not say with certainty, 'It is here,' or, 'It is there;' but we can say with absolute certainty, 'It is in the land somewhere;'

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and we may presume that the responsibility for the sin rests with individual or class in exact proportion to his or its share of social influence and mental enlightenment.

Nor are we interconnected only man with man, neighbour with neighbour, countryman with countryman. The wars in one hemisphere may carry famine into districts of the other, and filthy fanatics in an Arabian desert may set disease undulating to the shores of western Europe. We are slowly opening our eyes to the foolishness and short-sightedness of commercial jealousies, local or international; we are appreciating more and more the truth, that the prosperity and enlightenment of others, even though they be not our nearest neighbours, is, directly or indirectly, our own gain. We are found, in short, to be constituted by Nature's own ordinance each man his brother's keeper; and, in order to mind rightly our own business, we are compelled to mind the business of other people.

It is self-evident that a community gains by the physical healthiness of its individual members; it is equally self-evident that its happiness is increased by every rise in the aggregate mo-

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rality; and it would appear at first sight almost equally evident that, to ensure such obviously desirable results, the best method were to disseminate sound and useful knowledge. Indeed, it would appear that no community could shrink from the imperative duty of scattering broadcast such knowledge, without peril or detriment to itself. Where, then, are we to fix the boundary-line between social interference and individual free-will? How are we to define and limit that sound and useful knowledge which we are all bound to take when offered us, and which, in turn, we are bound to communicate to our neighbours?

Perfect culture we defined as fourfold; but of its four divisions one is of a composite nature, and its constituent parts may be made to amalgamate with two of the others. Thus, there is a morality of convention or imitation which is excellent in its effects, but, from the spontaneity of its growth, deserving neither of praise nor blame; there is a morality, drawn from experiment or reflection, also excellent in itself, and usually most commendable; and there is also a morality of sentiment, akin to spiritualism, which may soar to a sublimity of self-sacrifice and philan-

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thropy beyond the reach of scientific morality to follow, or may sink to depths of absurdity unfathomable to common sense. Conventional morality, as being founded on almost intuitive observation, and scientific ethics, as being drawn from experiment and thought, may come within the scope of mental training; and the morality of sentiment may be included in the spiritual division; and we may now re-define complete and perfect culture as threefold — physical, mental, and spiritual.

Man lives for two worlds—a present and a future; with regard to the world of time, he is a social being; with regard to that of eternity, an unit. The claims upon him of neither world are paramount. The twofold duties of actuality and aspiration may be likened to two separate and distinct plants whose stems are so intertwined that, if one plant be removed, the other will fall to the ground and wither away.

In a country whose inhabitants are semi-barbarous, or suffering from the pressure of alien and unequal laws, or where the religion of one class is permissively insulted by the religion of another, the patriot may be wholesomely combined with the ecclesiastic, as has been exem-

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plified in the records of Scottish and Irish history; but in a land striving constitutionally after equality, with no violently disturbing alien intermixture, as is the case with England, and in a land wherein, as in America, the equality of all men as citizens and absolute toleration in religion are elementary maxims, the statesman that, in his capacity of statesman, would overleap a spiritual boundary, should be held guilty of sacrilege, and a fool to boot; and the ecclesiastic that, in his official capacity, would intrude upon secular domains, should, in all cases, be held guilty of at least moral trespass. In lands thus favourably conditioned it would appear to be the duty of the state to interfere in the physical and mental training of its childhood, boyhood, and youth; whereas the spiritual training of these latter would be the exclusive business of parents and guardians, and of their specially authorized ecclesiastical delegates; and the spiritual development of a grown man would be his own business entirely, and into this field of culture the outer community could only then have a just plea of entry, when spiritualism, waxing morbid, scandalously defied universally current conventionalities, or, with a mischievous,

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though honestly-intentioned perversity, threw obstacles in the obvious path of human progress.

While advocating state-interference in education, we would deprecate an interference so extensive as would destroy all individual free action. The importance of wisely directing this domestic institution is, undoubtedly, not inferior to that of duly watching the course of foreign affairs; but we should not desire that direction to be carried as far as was done of late by a French minister of education, who could state that, at one particular moment, the lads in every public school of France were repeating one and the same lesson. The addition of a minister of education to our own Government would be an incalculable blessing, if, for a while, his duties were limited to the protection of the health and morals of young children against the ignorance and immorality of ignorant and immoral parents; to the enforcement of elementary instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic upon every boy in the empire; to the exaction of certificates of instruction in the elementary laws that regulate mental and physical health from all clergymen, schoolmasters, and governesses, and in the ele-

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ments of agriculture and political economy from all heirs or purchasers succeeding to, or entering upon, any estate, the extent or populousness of which might render its right management a matter of public moment. In other words, we would advocate state-interference, not for cutting and clipping what were moderately good in any systems in operation, but to extrude what were radically bad, and supply what were confessedly necessary. And we might venture to assert that a minister of education would almost in all cases need the co-operation and sympathy of ecclesiastics, and that this general co-operation could only be secured where religious equality prevailed. At the same time, ecclesiastical interference in matters purely secular should be sternly interdicted. Indeed, the ecclesiastic stands in a singular trio of relationships towards free mental culture; his favouring unofficious sympathy would operate refreshingly, like a soft and penetrating rain; his hostility acts as a drag upon the wheel of a carriage going uphill; his supremacy performs the office of an extinguisher.

If we wandered back in imagination to a very remote antiquity, we should probably find that

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the qualities of the hunter were the subject-matter of all training; by and by, pastoral and nomad life would intervene; a rude and simple agriculture, united with a more settled pastoral life, would follow; clustering villages would form for mutual protection against beasts and men of prey; villages would expand into towns; towns would be amalgamated into petty kingdoms by military adventurers; petty kingdoms would be united into empires; and all this while the civilisation of mankind would be widening and rising. The dog, the ox, the ass, and the horse would be domesticated; corn and wine would vary a simple fare; fire would be used for the preparation of food and the smelting of a few metals; the indefinite relationships of clan or tribe would concentre into the more specific and more humanizing relationships of the family; the rude foundations of special, municipal, and imperial law would be laid; religion would rise from the rude worship of logs, stones, charms, and amulets, to the adoration of the visible phenomena of Nature; minstrels and priests would spin inextricable allegories; misunderstood allegories would scatter broadcast innumerable superstitions; and impossible representatives of natural

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phenomena would be invoked by uninquiring votaries.

During these ages, all teaching, moral and mental, would be oral; the tent, the family hearth, or the public market-place would be the school-room; the enthusiasm of each succeeding generation would be kept alive by the recited sayings and exploits of bygone sages and warriors; and the most accomplished teacher would be he that could chant the longest ballad, and repeat the longest string of moral or utilitarian proverbs. And the wisdom of such a teacher and the value of his simple lessons should not be lightly esteemed by the sharers of a more complete civilisation. The ballad poetry of these simple times would possess a freshness that would afterwards be recovered only by geniuses of the highest order; and men would discuss with a singular clearness the problems of domestic and social life in times when there was so little of extraneous matter to divert attention.

From the general knowledge we possess of the various systems of training or education pursued by nations more or less civilised between the dawn of history and the commencement of our own epoch, we are warranted in inferring that

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the systems previously in vogue were practical, sensible, and explicable in all cases by inherent and surrounding circumstances; that children would be trained by a hunter to use the bow and follow the track of beasts; by a shepherd, to manage flocks and herds; by a smith, to work in iron, tin, copper, silver, and gold; by a warrior, to athletic exercises and the skilful use of arms; by the minstrel, to cultivate the memory and to play upon a stringed instrument; by a priest, to a right understanding of parables dimly understood by the outer world; and lastly, that some amount of skill in music and dancing with a limited knowledge of religious and romantic legend would be communicated to all in common. And we have not the slightest reason for presuming that the practical instruction in any one single case would be communicated in any other than the local vulgar tongue. At all events, there is no one authentically recorded instance of any ancient community wherein a boy or youth would be taught to speak and reason by the instrumentality of a language never spoken by his teacher, and unintelligible to his countrymen, to his neighbours, to his kinsfolk, and to himself.

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Among the ancient Hebrews a child in his nursery would hear his mother sing the sweet songs of Zion, would learn from her lips the varied story of his people's sufferings and glories, and through boyhood and youth he would learn from father and from elder the maxims of morality, the legal enactments, the ceremonial ordinances, the religious doctrines, that had been transmitted, orally or in writing, from a far distant ancestry. He would learn how to demonstrate his love towards the brethren, his charity and courtesy to the alien within his gates, his tenderness towards the brute creation, from the vivifying utterances of the aged and the wise. For a Hebrew father was strictly enjoined to expound these things to his children ; they were to be bound as a sign upon his hand, as a hem to his robe, as a frontlet between his eyes ; the doorposts and gateways of his dwelling were not of dumb wood, but with graven characters admonished his children and himself, in their goings out and their comings in, of their religion and their nationality. O gentle English readers, in the days of our forefathers were there no wise men, no legislators, no prophets, no singers of divine songs? In our own days are there none

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amongst us to tell of bird and beast and creeping thing ; of trees and plants, from the cedar of Libanus to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall? Have we no treasured wisdom of our own growth to carry about with us as a familiar thing, and to talk of with our little ones, as we sit with them at table, as we walk with them by the way ?

We have on record a notable history of one instructed in all the wisdom of the Ægyptians. From testimonies, direct and indirect, sacred and profane, we should infer that such wisdom would, indeed, be selfishly confined to a caste, that it would too often be employed as an instrument for acting with effect upon the ignorance of the uninitiated ; but that, apart from certain religious mysteries, it would be conversant with things practical ; with the observed motions of heavenly bodies ; with the habits and uses of certain birds, and beasts, and reptiles ; with land measurement, agriculture, architecture, and legislation.

Upon the walls of ancient Nineveh are still visibly engraven—so travellers inform us—the records of grammatical and astronomical science.

Centuries before the historic period of Greece, the learned of India had dissected their own sacred language of the Vedas with more of ana-

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tomical skill and industry than the learning of modern times has even yet brought to bear upon the superstitiously cultivated languages of Greece and Rome.

Of the Hellenic nations, the Lacedæmonians for two noteworthy reasons are deserving our special admiration. Woman, who in other and more intellectually refined cities of Greece was either a despised drudge or a petted plaything, was in Sparta the teacher of children, the companion, friend, and equal of man. Furthermore, the native sagacity of this people, quickened by the difficulties of their position, led them to bestow unusual care upon the training of childhood and boyhood. This all-important period of life seems with their neighbours to have been almost universally undervalued and neglected; and practically with these latter it was with setting youth or dawning manhood that life worth the name began. Not so in Lacedæmon; the public meals, the sacred dance, the mimic array of war, the hymn chanted in chorus at the altar, the procession in the streets, the reverence exacted by old age,—all would combine to instil an early sense of co-operation and duty and responsibility, to indurate the heart by

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desuetude against considerations purely selfish, and to mould it by habit and association to a keen susceptivity of generous impulses and an almost spontaneous proclivity to self-denial and self-sacrifice.

My own lot is cast in a city in the streets of which are daily seen strolling, lolling, and sprawling an apparently countless multitude of little children. A stranger coming suddenly amongst us would imagine that the metropolis of the island had flooded us with an excursion train, crammed with her youngest, poorest, raggedest, dirtiest, merriest. It would be worth our while to take a lesson from ancient Sparta, and with the aid of fife music and measured movements in child battalions to impress these purposeless ragamuffins with a sense of order, obedience, and co-operation. Indeed, such lessons would be equally valuable to the better regulated children of our wealthier classes. Regular troops would ere long be superfluous for the protection of Great Britain, if her children and boys and youths went through drill as a compulsory part of their training; and, if every grown man of sound health could make an intelligent use of a rifle, alone or in the ranks, there would be an

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universal sense of independence and citizenhood, such as would doubtless disperse and clear away a variety of cobwebs social and political.

And now I remember that, long ago, in a walk through the streets of old Dunedin, I met a band of little fellows marching two and two, all fife in hand, with a drummer at their head. They were the waifs and strays of society. From alleys, lanes, and closes, from the waysides and the hedges, had been gathered in these little human weeds. By the beautiful and unseen coercion of philanthropy they had been drawn into their schoolrooms. They were now out upon a holiday ramble, and were learning a lesson of good order in their hours of leisure and in the midst of merriment. My heart went with the urchins as they tramped along. It is true the fifes were a little shrill, and the drummer seemed possessed by the very Genius of noise; but to the ears of my understanding the music seemed to tell of the crooked that was being made straight, of the rough places that were being made smooth, and of waste places that were being robbed of their desolation. And here I would respectfully suggest that the Jesuit Fathers, in whose hands is vested the responsibility of teaching in my own

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city of Galway, might profitably take a hint from their Presbyterian brethren. They have abundance of child-material at hand ; they have abundance of Christian charity in their hearts. I would willingly assist them in the schoolroom, if they would accept the aid of a heretic ; I would gladly spend a summer's day walking by their child-squadrons, and would listen with feelings of gratitude and reverence as the children at eventide sang some hymn or canticle hallowed by their own immemorial religion.

To return to Hellas, from which I have inadvertently wandered. In other Grecian states than Sparta childhood would be passed under the care of women ; and Grecian women would there be but little fitted to lay the first foundations of an intellectual or a manly training. Men of wealth and position would employ a something between a male nurse and a foster-father to superintend their boys ; but from tutor, nurse, or mother an ordinary Greek child would learn little but an unconscious familiarity with his own exquisite language, and a string of impossible and fantastic stories, such as were imbedded in a then unintelligible mythology and would meet him in after-life as the subject-matter of lyric

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verse, comedy, tragedy, painting, and sculpture. The teaching, however, for all its quaintness and fantasticality, was still practical, as being homogeneous with the civilisation into which he was destined by and by to enter.

The teaching of an Athenian lad would probably be confined to numeration, elementary mental arithmetic, elementary geometry with its figures traced on sand; the committal to memory of battle scenes from Homer, of favourite lyrics, and of passages selected from tragedies on account of their proverb-wisdom or their undramatic but graphic and elocutionary characteristics.

It was only in youth or early manhood that the higher culture was enjoyed in such cities as Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rhodes. The son of a father of independent means would frequent the gymnasium to develop his muscular powers; would learn dancing and music for the attainment of corporeal and mental grace; would attend the class-room of a fashionable rhetorician to acquire fluency of utterance, correctness and elegance of expression, turns and twists of oratory, and facility in debate; and eventually would follow the lectures of some distinguished

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philosopher, and would hear discussed—always with ingenuity, if not always with effect—the ethical relationships of man to man, the characteristics of varied polities, the end and object of human endeavour, the mysterious co-existence of good and evil, the nature of man, the immortality of the soul, the existence or non-existence of God. Much of what he would hear would seem as desultory arrows shot from a large circumference ; but every arrow would be aimed inwards, either at or towards the centre of practical utility, and no arrow would be shot out into space blindly and at nothing.

Making due allowances for the limited field of ancient mental research, an Athenian youth might be considered as comparatively more broadly and wholesomely instructed than the majority of modern academic students. Physical training, elocutionary grace, and debating skill are little, if at all, heeded in the universities of Scotland and Germany, or in the university to which I myself now belong. In the wealthy universities of Cambridge and Dublin the most valuable prizes are monopolized by the students of pure ancient classics and pure mathematics. At Oxford, a somewhat more generous pabulum

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is given, and logic and ethics are held in esteem ; but in all these three great academies, science, social, political, legal, and physical, is either regarded as subsidiary or omitted altogether.

The chief characteristic of modern education is the predominance of the grammatical and linguistic element—and that, too, only partially applied,—and the partial or absolute exclusion of other obviously useful and indispensable branches of knowledge. This system of instruction, now anachronistically strait-waistcoated, is more than two thousand years of age. It had its rise in Alexandria, in the centuries immediately preceding our era, at a period when, owing to the Macedonian conquests, the Greek language had spread over the eastern world, and when in that language all the intellectual treasures of the world were contained. The works that here would influence most powerfully the minds of students and teachers would be the speculations of Plato, the logical, ethical, and physical treatises of Aristotle, and, what were probably of still greater value, the mathematical investigations of Aristarchus, Eratosthenes, Hipparchus—the disputant with Aristotle for the grand title of 'wisest and greatest,'—

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and, in much later days, of the Ptolemy whose name is more familiarly on our lips, and whose speculations and collections were the scientific encyclopædia of Europe for some fifteen hundred years. For the use of foreigners Greek grammarians invented means of facilitating the study of their own intricate tongue by improving upon ancient typography, by separating the words upon the printed or written page, by devising stops and accentual signs, and by drawing up codes of right or fashionable speech. The system was only amplified when, in the chief provincial cities of the Roman empire, the language and literature of the imperial city would be additional ingredients in the education of literary and professional men. But still, during the times of the early Cæsars, the schools of York, Lyons, Marseilles, Cordova, Naples, Syracuse, Athens, Rhodes, and Alexandria would all be in keeping and harmony with an actual outer-lying civilisation. The student and the man would breathe the same mental atmosphere; on the part of teachers there would be no years wasted in the vain endeavour to teach little fish to fly and little birds to swim.

Indeed, the reasons which justified the limited

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educational curriculum of a young Roman student are as obvious as the reasons which condemn the like limitation in our own times. A young patrician in the days of Tiberius would hear treated in his own language the elements of law and statesmanship; but in almost every department of theoretic and speculative learning it would be impossible for him, by any ambitious stretch of intellectual effort, to push beyond the limits of Greek thought. The higher literature of his own country numbered less than a score of names. He might have read the comedies of Plautus and Terence, the historic fragments of Sallust, the campaigns of Julius Cæsar, some few of the 500 volumes of encyclopædic Varro, many of the speeches and general treatises of Cicero, the picturesque historic-novel of Livy, the poems entire of Lucretius, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Propertius, and Tibullus, and, perhaps, the few satires of cotemporary Persius. But of these writers only Cæsar, Varro, and Persius were thoroughly Roman; and even the latter of these was writing in a borrowed metre. Plautus and Terence had stolen plots and metres wholesale from Athenian comedy; Sallust was a poor imitator of the terse and philosophic Thucydides; Cicero had

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gathered showy but not invaluable gleanings from Greek philosophy; Lucretius was indebted to Empedocles and Epicurus for his philosophy; Virgil to Homer for his story; Hellenic mythology had kindled the fancy of Ovid; Horace was an imitator of Alcæus and Sappho; and every metre of every one of the Roman poets was Hellenic. Greek, occasionally, would be the language used by the rhetorician in enunciating rules of grammar, or stratagems of oratory, or tricks of elocution. Greek would invariably be the language spoken in the lecture-room, the garden, or the portico, when by a grave and dogmatic teacher the various claims were weighed of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, and Chrysippus. Our student, in a sentimental mood, would address Greek anacreontics to a real or imaginary mistress; in a serious humour, would flatten some moral platitude beneath the weight of mediocre Greek elegiacs. Greek, moreover, would be the language in which he might freely, in the presence of domestics, communicate a secret over the triclinium at home; and at his university of Athens he would receive from time to time a letter from his father or uncle, crammed with excellent, if not original, moral sentiments,

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and interlarded with Greek expressions for which Latin equivalents might easily have been found; and the words in these Greek scraps, to the youth's amusement, would very often be wrongly spelt and wrongly accentuated. All this while, then, our youth would be breathing a natural atmosphere. He would be drinking in from living, if not always from limpid, waters. The works he chiefly studied were the most perfect extant specimens of wit, grace, subtlety, dignity, and beauty, and were all more or less practically connected with the rise in civilisation and refinement of his own land.

From the establishment of Christianity to the conquest of Constantinople, the capitals of the two empires were centres of diverse civilisations. In character the eastern capital seems a hybrid mixture of Athens and Bagdad. We have there Hellenic subtlety and elegance, combined with the mysticism and barbaric splendour of the far east. We have a ready-made civilisation, social, political, and ecclesiastical, prolonging an artificial life through a thousand years, and thus reminding us of those weakly human constitutions that, from time to time, belie the fears of friends and the prognostications of physicians,

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by continuing a precarious life to the limits of extreme age. We feel but little interested in a civilisation that has left so insignificant an impress upon European thought; we can only presume that in Christian Constantinople the ordinary training of youth would be conversant with abstruse, unpractical, metaphysico-religious dogmas, with theories of the divine right of emperors, and with regulations of etiquette as intricate and unedifying as the rites and ceremonies of Almacks or Pekin. Such training, however, would be so far superior to that of our own children in that it would be congenially artificial in an atmosphere of universal artificiality.

Of the western empire and its mental condition we can speak with more of eulogy and less of arbitrary presumption. While Europe was echoing to the tread of southward-pouring barbarians, wit and genius fled for refuge to the sanctuary, and, at times, laid hold upon the holy things with unsanctified hands, eating the shewbread that the priests alone should eat. Beneath impartial folds the mantle of the church covered priest and musician and poet and painter and lawyer and physician and man of letters and philosopher. The imperial majesty of Rome

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settled slowly and imperceptibly upon the head of the Roman pontiff; the ritual of the church was worded in the old imperial dialect; in the hierarchy were conserved the legal and pontifical traditions of an ancient and exclusive patriciate. For centuries the church was a confederacy of the men of brain as opposed to the men of force. The earnest devotee, the patrician lawyer, the scholastic dialectician, the semi-pagan artist, all united their efforts to erect an edifice that should shelter them until the storm were overpast. Meanwhile the shattered empire of the West formed gradually into new crystals; feudal institutions arose naturally and spontaneously out of universal insecurity; chivalric sentiment was the precipitate formed by the fusion of military pride with the softening worship of the Virgin Mother; the noble was trained from boyhood to courtesy, truth, and skill in martial exercises—a noble education; the plebeian would move as a pawn upon a similar war chessboard; but the artist and the scholar would owe all their inspiration and their knowledge to their ecclesiastical mother. In speaking of mediæval Europe we are now-a-days too prone to speak flippantly concerning supposedly dark ages; we view with

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amazement their cathedrals and abbeys ; with a little envy their glass, their wood-carving, and their tapestries ; but these and the like material marvels are, to our thinking, counterbalanced by beliefs in witchcraft, dogmatic subtleties, and religious materialism. We should in fairness remember that, until the revival of Greek literature, the culture of Europe was abreast of her intellectual resources and in keeping with the spirit of the times ; its component elements were drawn from Christian doctrines, from Roman law, from the logic and ethics of Aristotle,—in other words, from the best, or rather from all the good materials within reach. With this utilisation of all available advantages we must contrast our educational neglect of the accumulated scientific knowledge of three hundred years ; with the generous spirit of European brotherhood then inculcated, the narrowness of our national and local prejudices ; and, when we speak disparagingly of scholastic absurdities, let us think humbly of our hexameters, pentameters, alcaics, and iambics, or peruse with a subdued and chastened spirit some of the portentous conundrums in mathematic analysis with which our Cambridge examiners annually rack the brains

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of her wearied, and, alas! too often her stupefied wranglers.

But in the mediæval days, if Christian Europe lay beneath an atmosphere of tempered light, an almost noonday brightness shone over Saracenic Spain; and, by a singular turn of the scales, the land that now under Christian rule lingers far behind the forward-moving kingdoms of Europe was in Mohammedan hands the cradle and the nursery of European science. Nay, the route of civilisation is herein shown as indirect even to fantasticality. Long after Greece had sunk into provincial insignificance, and the library of Alexandria had been destroyed by Mohammedan fanaticism, the philosophy of Athens and the physical science of Alexandria were compulsorily sent in Greek volumes from the Bosphorus to the Tigris; and from Bagdad the resuscitated learning spread to Ægypt once again, and thence to Morocco, and thence to Spain, and thence, in feeble radiance for a while, it scintillated upon Christian Europe. To the Arab of Spain we are indebted for his keeping alight through centuries the Alexandrine lamp of science, until from it a new lamp was lit by Nicholas Zepernic of Thorn.

For some considerable period after the intro-

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duction of Protestantism into England and Scotland, learning was restricted to within its traditional limits, and was almost a perquisite of the clergy. Nay, until within the memory of men now living, the study of Latin grammar and Latin literature composed seven-tenths of our entire educational curriculum. In the High Schools of Scotland, Latin, under the title of 'the Humanities,' was the one recognised item of mental food; and to this day Greek literature is in the greater part of them but partially cultivated; and in many schools writing, arithmetic, and modern languages are considered as subsidiary, or as articles of intellectual or æsthetic luxury, to be paid for separately, and declined at pleasure. Twenty years ago very few English grammar schools taught even the beggarly elements of mathematics; here and there a Frenchman would be the butt of ridicule to unmannerly lads, whose short-sighted contempt for their teacher's language was due to the stolid prejudices of their parents; the language of Goethe and Schiller was in all these schools a dead language, or was rather as a language that had never yet been born.

During this interval great advances have been

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made, chiefly by such proprietary schools as those of Cheltenham, Marlborough, and Edinburgh, which with, commercially speaking, a discreet spirit of compromise, whilst they grasp new things by the hand, cling on to the skirts of things old. In such quarters the study of modern languages is gaining more and more of respectful attention; and the remarkable fact seems to be coming out into clearer and clearer relief, that we, the modern English people, have of our own a language unsurpassed in copiousness and power, and a literature unequalled in dignity, wisdom, utility, and beauty.

But how stands the case with our great historic public schools, to which the children of our nobility flock, that they may associate with their social equals, and the children of our wealthier middle-class, that they may rub shoulders with their social superiors? You are aware that, not long ago, at the most aristocratic and the wealthiest of these schools mutton was the only animal food, and classics the only mental food, of her alumni. The system of exclusiveness could only be improved upon by exacting, that henceforth mutton should be restricted to cold mutton, and that, instead of classics badly taught,

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we should have classics taught badly and foolishly to a superlative degree. Some such improvement has, in fact, been carried out. A conclave of schoolmasters was recently held, every member of which was a man of undoubted learning ; and a manual of elementary classical instruction has been issued, which throws into the shade all ancient productions founded upon the divine theory of Unintelligibility. In a coming chapter it will be our amusement or bewilderment to bring forward specimens of the newly patented methods by means of which intellectual twilight in boyhood may be converted into a mystic and religious pitch darkness. We shall be brought, perhaps reluctantly, to acknowledge that—at least in the matter of education—things can never be so bad but that human learning and ingenuity, unimpeded by mother-wit and common-sense, can contrive to make them a very great deal worse.

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II.

SCHOOL MEMORIES.

IT was on a sunny morning in a far away spring-time, that I stood between my Mother and my brother, by the coach in front of the old Bull and Mouth Inn. I was a little over seven years of age, had just doffed my frock or some equally semi-feminine garment, and was now encased in an imitation horse-hair shirt, yellow worsted stockings, fustian knee-breeches, a yellow hearth-rug petticoat, and a long blue gown ; a red leathern girdle went round my waist ; a pair of parson's bibs hung down from my neck ; and my hair was cut so short that I think I might have been used, with a little inconvenience to the user and myself, as a hair-brush. I cannot say what my poor dear Mother thought of the grotesque-looking article before her. She was bewildered in the midst of her sorrow. I think she looked upon me as a ridiculously small parody upon John the

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Baptist, bound for years of sojourning in the wilderness and of feeding there on locusts and wild honey. I went into the wilderness; but, for nine of my twelve years there spent, I fed mentally on locusts only, and the food was very disagreeable.

There were packed some six of us new bedizenments inside the coach; a greater number clustered on the exterior. To a spectator at a distance it would have seemed as though the conveyance had been settled on by a swarm of unnaturally large bumble-bees. For the space of about ten minutes we were all too sad to speak; we were, in fact, all weeping—going, as it were, to the funeral of our respective childhoods. By and by I was seized with a happy thought. Underneath the seat I had a huge cake, within a wrapper of brown paper. It was to be given in charge to my matron, on my arrival at St. Edward's-in-the-Fields; and the dispensation to me of a slice per diem would, it was supposed, extend my memory of home over at least a lunar month. I had recently purchased a large clasp knife; with this I anatomized the cake into thin eccentrical sections, and introduced myself by handing them round to my fellow-passengers.

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Some one from without must have scented our proceedings; for a large brown hand was inserted at the top of the window, by way of mute but intelligible petitioning. Slices were put within the brown hand, until all the outsiders had been supplied; and there was a pause for twenty minutes, when the brown hand reappeared; but the clasp knife was in my pocket, and there was nothing left for it to cut.

It was evening when we arrived at St. Edward's. There was a posse of lads at the gate, curious to see the new-comers. In reply to the usual interrogatory I gave my name, which was misinterpreted into Dobson—a circumstance that gave me a short-lived popularity. The name of misconception was that of the chieftain of my ward or sleeping-room. I was immediately ushered into the presence, and for a time was treated with general consideration, as the chieftain expressed a conviction of our distant relationship. Before very long, however, upon closer questioning, the real spelling of my name together with the disappearance of the cake was ascertained, and my borrowed plumage was incontinently stripped off me. Indeed, for the first time in my life I knew what it was to have

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my *head punched*, and, at the time, I had an indistinct idea that I deserved it.

I may as well state, in passing, that the poor chieftain died not long after, in the infirmary, of some epidemic fever; and I felt exceedingly sorry at the occurrence, for it positively never struck me that his decease could be viewed in the light of a judgment. Strange to say, I caught the fever shortly after, and had to occupy the bed in which he died. My companions in the sick-ward informed me of the fact, with the pardonable indiscretion of boyhood. The information was not of a cheering character, and led me to a forecasting of my destiny which experience has mercifully shown to be incorrect and premature.

For a year and a half I remained in the country division of the great school of St. Edward's. The great majority of my companions were, for eleven months in the year, total exiles from home; dreary dwellers in Siberia; hermetically sealed from home joys and merriment. My own matron was a pretty, kind, lady-like woman; the superintendent was a handsome, well-bred, and kind-hearted gentleman; but the discipline of a school containing over four hun-

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dred boys was necessarily strict, and Latin and Greek, especially when administered in the dear old English fashion, was dry and tasteless food. I was a great deal more happily circumstanced than my comrades; for my mother had taken a tiny cottage at Spitalbrook, by Hoddesdon, some four miles from school; and I was allowed once a month to spend Saturday and Sunday at home. I remember how surprised they would appear at my rough ways and my usage of school slang; how young my Mother used to seem to me; how like a girl my brother; and oh! the delight, after weeks of bullying in the play-ground and unintelligible mutterings in the school-room, to stand for a summer's day by the shallow narrow waters of the New River, angling for sticklebacks and minnows!

My purpose here is not to discuss or criticise educational systems, to describe and exprobrate any dismally useless course of study. I wish only to recall the humorous associations of my boyhood and youth; to stereotype, ere they vanish, and fix, as by photography, old Will-o'-the-Wisp whimsicalities; to sketch the social landscape of the old quaint school, with its occasional lights and its many shadows, before it be

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too late to sketch—before the setting of the boy-memory within me.

The head-master in the commercial division of the school made a deep impression on me; in fact, he made several impressions on me in a variety of ways. He was a little fat man, like Napoleon, and had many special qualities for rule in common with his comparatively more famous prototype. He was a short, dumpy, spheroidal man, and walked with a spring in his gait, as though his feet, like those of dogs and cats, were fitted with elastic cushions. He seemed absolutely to spurn the earth; at all events, he never seemed to think it worth looking at, but appeared to be evermore on tip-toe, gazing over an invisible wall at some object a foot or two beneath a distant horizon. His round, self-satisfied, but not uncomely face was like a full moon when suffused with the redness indicative of coming wind; perspiration gathered easily on his forehead; and in the exercise of his duties he mopped himself with a red silk handkerchief and puffed and puffed continually. This subdued kind of snorting was very impressive. As he always held his head a little thrown back, it seemed as if he were ducking upwards out of too thick a

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medium, and taking in breaths of thinner air, like a grampus. During our writing hours he would intone, or, more correctly speaking, toll vocally certain sentences, which were the axioms of caligraphy—the thirty-nine articles of our copy-book creed. One article I remember to this day, for it seemed in a strikingly graphic way to describe the personnel of the speaker: *Round at the top and round at the bottom, and thick from top to bottom.*

Every now and then the monotony of our daily routine would be tragically, but not altogether unpleasingly, diversified by an execution. Some miserable urchin, whose round-hand would have run into a small-pox of blots, would be ordered into the dark lobby, between the inner and the outer door, at the far corner of the school. Four comrades, pressed into the hateful service, would accompany him; one would serve as horse, two of them would have a leg a-piece to hold secure, and the fourth would have the more ignoble task assigned him of holding tight over the wretch's head the extremity of his garments, so as to leave exposed the orthodox surface for birch-correction. Meanwhile, over the listening school-room would be

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heard the sound as of a hail storm, and stifled shrieks that seemed to issue from out a bull of Phalaris. Then the hail storm would cease, and the shrieks would die away; and from the den would emerge on tip-toe our little fat judge and ruler, with his chin very high in air, and a great deal of perspiration on his forehead, and puffing from his lips frequent and audible puffs of magisterial wind. By and by would follow the satellites, with the look of having shared in some serious and dignifying responsibility; and lastly would reappear the culprit himself, to be, in the estimation of his school-fellows, a martyr for the day and a hero for a week.

I humbly but devoutly thank my stars that I was never so martyrized. It is not the physical pain that I would so strongly deprecate; for in my time I was often subjected to punishments more severe than the ordinary birch-flogging, and they left, for the most part, no permanent feeling of shame or anger behind them. The horror of the old time-honoured punishment consists in the unspeakably ludicrous position into which a poor fellow is hoisted between earth and heaven; a sight to set the gods on high Olympus roaring over their nectar with inex-

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tinguishable laughter. To this very day, and on this very day, they are guffawing at the tragico-comedy, as it is being enacted in the grammar schools of dear conservative, wilful, pigheaded old England.

A very singular superstition was prevalent in this junior school in my time, and I have little doubt that it has descended by tradition. From a misinterpretation of a verse in the Athanasian crèed it was supposed that the muttered repetition of the word 'Trinity' was a specific against all peril. Vicarious repetition was included in the doctrine. I have known a big fellow, when summoned unexpectedly to the master's desk, pass the order round for every one to say 'Trinity' for him as fast as possible; and for a few seconds there would be some fifty of us chattering the word as quickly as our tongues could move. Sometimes the charm failed; and vengeance would be taken by a bully upon the little wretches whom he logically supposed to have uttered the mystic word with insufficient vehemence, rapidity, and faith.

There were also two terrible legends current, and universally believed. It was said that, many years ago, two infatuated boys had sinned be-

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yond repentance in the following ways: one had said his prayers backwards; and the other had written a letter in his own blood to the Power of Evil, and placed it beneath his pillow before going to sleep. The morning after, the beds of both were found empty, and no tidings were ever heard of either. The cause and manner of their disappearance was horrible, but obvious. There were several big boys, whose statements admitted of no questioning, who had been told by the night-watchers that the ghosts of these miserable young sinners were continually seen after midnight in the infirmary back-yard.

Underneath the writing-school were very extensive passages and cellars, forming a species of petty Labyrinth. I ventured once a considerable way inside; but suddenly was seized with a panic, and scurried back to the light of day. This was the favourite haunt of an old man, named Bush, who was general scavenger and performer of all nasty work. He was probably the grimiest man in the world outside of Poland. Had the poet Æschylus once set eyes on him, he would have styled him in his own boldly figurative way, 'The Twin-brother of Dirt.' On all hands he was suspected, not without cause, of being an ogre.

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Bones in large quantities were known to be stored up in his secret cave. One very big boy in my own sleeping-room once informed us that he had watched his time, when Bush was otherwise engaged, and had penetrated within the cave until he had reached a spot where was a kind of well, and round the well were great piles of bones. He had dipped his finger in the well, and, to his horror, had found that the liquid it contained was blood! The bones, therefore, were in all probability not beef or mutton bones! One little Paynim miscreant made some puerile suggestion about red ink and dinner-remains; but he was at once summarily dealt with by the justly-offended narrator, to the great satisfaction of all us believers, and to the entire removal of his own pestilent and unnatural incredulity.

It was not long after the recital of these horrors that Bush left the service of the school, and he was frequently seen driving a gig upon the high road, with his face approximately clean and a white shirt on. The report current in the outer town was, that he had inherited a small fortune from a distant relative; but the people of the outer town knew nothing about the winding

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cellars, the pool of blood, and the huge heaps of human bones.

Occasionally, on half-holidays, we were taken out in charge of a beadle in long file of two and two for walks into the country. These rambles were to us hermits sweet beyond the conception of ordinary loose-tied boys. The great majority of us were the merest chits ; and yet for us sun after sun went drearily rising and drearily setting, and there was no pleasant talk and gossip over a breakfast-table, no romping in garden or orchard, no birds'-nesting in lane or wood, no cake or fruit by comfortably-lighted table after dinner, no kiss before going to bed. These country walks seemed to loosen for a time our fetters, and carry us, in a strange way, miles and miles and miles nearer home. Our favourite walk was one that led towards a slightly undulating hill, on the side of which was a deep precipitous pit. Were I to pass that pit now-a-days, I should possibly and foolishly conjecture that it had been quarried for building purposes. We had, however, the word of our guide, good and kindly Mr. Crossman, that this was the identical pit in which had lived for years the cannibal Sawney Beany with his traveller-crunching family.

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Some boys, whose eyes were very keen, or whose imaginations were very lively, could discern fragments of skeletons at the bottom of the den. Once, lying prostrate on the ground, I peeped down into the horrible hole, but failed to make out any decided specimens of human remains. The depth, however, of the place confirmed me in my previous and well-grounded ideas respecting the size of men and women, and especially of cannibals, in past ages.

In addition to our ordinary play-ground, we had, in summer, a large field for cricket and similar sports. The field was bounded by an easily-surmounted wooden paling, and beyond this wooden wall lay the turnips of one Mullins. These were apples of the Hesperides, watched incessantly by the dragons, Allen and Crossman. At times an adventurer would be gathering the sweet fruit into his lap for his comrades and himself, when Allen would drop as it were down from the clouds like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, would kindly assist the weeping trespasser to the right side of the frail boundary, would march him off with a numerous and sympathizing but mysteriously-delighted escort to the office of the superintendent, and the offender would be exe-

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cuted on the spot, untried, unshriven. For my own part, I never once crossed over into Mullins'; perhaps I was too discreet; perhaps I was too much of a coward. Since the days of boyhood, however, I have too often had the foolish hardihood to climb over into Mullins', and gather turnips, fancying they were golden apples; but an unseen Allen has invariably detected me, and led me off to an unseen Superintendent, who has invariably administered the rod.

As a brain left to feed upon itself and denied the invigorating and cheering influence of society and books turns morbid and hypochondriac, so our coterie, cut off from the outer world, was a prey, from time to time, to the most fantastic panics and illusory alarms. One panic in particular I remember. In extent and groundlessness it had an antitype in the panic at Athens consequent upon the mutilation of the Hermæ. Chartism at the time was the bugbear of England, as is Fenianism of modern Ireland. Information of a specific kind had been brought in a mysterious way to some boy or boys unknown, that the school was destined for pillage, and that a Chartist spy was secreted in the lower chamber beneath some bed in number seven

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ward. Not a soul would enter that chamber. A general council was held, and it was decreed that lots should be cast among the members of the unhappy ward for the appointment of an *enfant perdu*—a solitary forlorn hope. At this moment, a volunteer stepped forward. His name was Jones; a name never to be forgotten. I think it never will be forgotten. A second David, he simply armed himself with the leaden plug of the lavatory, entered alone the suspected chamber, and crept in the dark under the two long rows of beds. Meanwhile, we were listening below for the crash of weapons or the sound of fire-arms. We heard nothing; and after a while Jones reappearing dispelled our alarms. The Chartists must have been made aware of our state of preparation and the resolution of our leader; for their original intentions of pillage and murder were never carried out.

When sisters and cousins of a marriageable age live together, how they must flutter with curiosity and trepidation and hope, when a likable young fellow comes for the first time among them! Meanwhile, he poises like a hawk, swoops down, and, unless he miss his aim, clutches one of the sweet flutterers, and away with her he flies

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to his own cold bachelor nest. How bewildered must be the brain of a chicken, in among a brood of brother and sister chickens, when he sees the cook from time to time seize upon a companion or two, and carry them away to a bourne from whence chickens never return! Must he not wonder occasionally when his own turn will come to be hurried away, to have his neck twisted, and be roasted or boiled or made into a delicious curry? Something of the kind were my feelings when I heard at distant intervals a list of names read out of the boys that, either from superannuation or progress in study, were destined to fill up vacancies in the great school in the metropolis.

What marvellous legends were afloat among us regarding that great Ninevite school! It had (in fact as well as in report) a thousand boys; and some of the boys in the nautical school were of immense strength and superhuman stature—Brobdignag boys; any one of whom could demolish with a blow a butcher or a bargeman; and at the head of the school, far removed from the thick lower atmosphere, sphered in a clear serene empyrean, were the seven Hellenists—the seven Latin and Greek sages—seven lamps of learning—a sacred brotherhood—a particular people. It

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was said that every Saturday they had for a revisal lesson the last long sentence that covers nearly half a page in the Latin Delectus; that they had each a guinea a week pocket-money allowed them by the Government; and that they were continually being asked to dine with the Lord Mayor.

At last the list was read in public wherein my name appeared. I had been hitherto a boy, and had thought as a boy; but now I was to put away boyish things. The great school was in the heart of Nineveh, and Nineveh was the great pulsing heart of the big world. If a lad worked hard in that great central school, would he not receive the bâton of Hellenisty? And would not a Hellenist dine habitually with the Lord Mayor, and knock his forehead against uncomfortably low-ceilinged skies? And yet it was a pity to leave St. Edward's-in-the-Fields; for the pretty matron had been kind and motherly; the clerical Draco who had flogged me with his riding-whip had been replaced by a somewhat stern but just and earnest and high-principled gentleman; Ramsay, the gigantic but gentle usher, was a man not to be easily forgotten; the writing-master, with all his pomp and glory and superfluity of inner wind, was a kindly man

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and an able teacher, and severe only to the profligate and abandoned that defaced their conscience and their copy-book with unnecessary and wilful blots. Not an enemy was left, but very many friends. Moreover, Spitalbrook was near at hand, and would be passed by the coach as it went its London journey. Good-bye to the sticklebacks and the minnows! The invisible Policeman says: 'Move on; my little man, you must move on!'

Since then, I have heard, on two or three other occasions, the same mysterious voice. When I left St. Edward's for Camelot; when I left Camelot for Dunedin; when I had bidden good-bye to some forty little fellows in Dunedin, and closed the door upon them, to leave for the Citie of the Tribes. What a strange and awful feeling must be his whom this policeman, Destiny, grips vice-like by the arm for the last time, pressing a bâton underneath his ribs, and saying in a cold but very impressive tone: 'Come, sir, the thoroughfare is blocked up; you really *must* move on!'

Naked we came into this world, and naked we go out of it. I brought nothing with me to St. Edward's-in-the-Fields, and I took nothing

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away save a little writing and arithmetic, and a very small amount of harmless rubbish in the way of Greek and Latin rules, that had been administered in an unintelligible phraseology. Nay, nay ; I took away something—a few pleasant and affectionate memories. Consequently, I may say that I left St. Edward's-in-the-Fields with my heart charged, but not crammed, with boy-affections, and the carpet-bag of my intelligence filled, partly with luggage, and partly, by way of *remplissage*, with cinders, gravel, sawdust, and marine-stores.

Imagine, reader, what your sensations would be, supposing that, without your waking, you were lifted out of bed, placed softly in a wheelbarrow, and hurled off and turned over into the middle of Rag-Fair. Something of the kind were my sensations on first arriving at the great Ninevite school. It was a kind of noisy, multitudinous, ill-regulated city. My individuality seemed merged in a great sea of life ; instead of spreading out from a little boy into a big boy, I collapsed from a little boy into a dwarf, a pygmy, a hop-o'-my-thumb, a gnat, a nonentity. Like a digit, under an arithmetical process of evanescence, I *went out.* Years, entire years

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passed over, leaving me still in bewilderment. Life was void, chaotic, and shrouded in a mist wherein I was mechanically groping. The morning of a day would be spent in the grammar-school over some three or four lines of Phædrus. And what a curious language that Latin was! Why, an ordinary uninspired lad could no more scent out a hide-and-seek verb than a cow could set at a partridge. You would have *lupus* a nominative here, and *inquit* its verb lines away, out of sight, anywhere. Sometimes, upon a Monday, an orphan lamb in the accusative case would be bleating after a mother-verb that had been butchered and parsed on Saturday. Who was Phædrus? Was he a schoolmaster in the days when men talked Latin? But when they did talk it, used they to parse all the words as they went along, and decline the word for 'soup' if they asked for soup at dinner, and run the chance of dative cases sticking in their throats like fish-bones? But what on earth had we little fellows done to the governors that we should be forced to learn Latin? Would it not be far better to catch the measles, and go to the Infirmary, and lie in bed for weeks, and have oranges to suck when we were convalescent?

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But really, after all, what had we done to the governors that they should go out of their way to employ such a lot of clergymen to feed us day after day with this curious and nasty-tasting and utterly indigestible Latin-and-Greek food? How would they like it themselves? Some of them, I afterwards found out, had either never swallowed the same kind of intellectual sawdust, or had thrown it up long before they reached manhood. Perhaps, they really believed this food to be wholesome; perhaps, they had no other mental food to give. They certainly could not be feeding us on intellectual garbage out of pure malice, for the whole institution was a colossal monument of benevolence; the greatest monument of the kind in the known world. We numbered in all some fifteen hundred pupils. From the moment a lad entered to the day he left school, all he was called on to provide for himself were his handkerchiefs and his gloves. Education, board, clothing, lodging, all were gratuitously given. An invalid was treated with greater care than any private means could afford, and with as much kindness as the kindest home could bestow. Indeed, apart from the generous medical arrangements, the pleasant

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face, cheery voice, and genial ways of our resident physician were enough to make a child reconciled to any illness but one involving acute pain. With benevolence underlying and permeating our institution, when every article of our physical food was of the best quality, why was the greater part of our mental food so tasteless, so unwholesome, so gritty? Nature, they say, is a riddle past finding out. I take it she is but a poor riddle in comparison with the crotchets of humanity.

In the afternoon we would have our three hours in the writing-school—and that was generally great fun. After an hour and a half of reading and ciphering the remainder of the time was devoted to writing. A skilful hand could get through this work in half an hour, and so save an hour for amusement. Idlers by the dozen would be walking in amongst the desks, pretending to make pens, serve out ink, or borrow knives, but in reality proclaiming lotteries, catering for prick-books, selling, at outrageous profits, almonds, raisins, toffy, sausages, saveloys, and slices of roley-poley pudding. Sometimes, at briefest notice, the senior master would make a visit of general inspection, and a

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sudden destruction would come unawares upon the idlers in Pen-and-ink Fair—a temporary deluge would overwhelm them; but on the morrow the interspaces of the desks would be thronged again, and Commerce would be holding on her irrepressible way.

In this singular school-market I was always a purchaser; that is, when I had the wherewithal to purchase. Almonds were sold at twenty the penny; raisins, not Muscatel, at thirty; cakes of toffy and other articles were so divided into pennyworths as to give a regular profit of cent per cent. I have known a skilful salesman make his five shillings by the week's end out of an investment of sixpence on the Monday morning. One holiday, as I returned schoolwards with a sixpence in my pocket, I was seized with the spirit of covetousness, and purchased, with intent to sell, a little round of toffy. That evening in bed I divided it into twelve pennyworths, wrapped these same neatly in paper, placed them beneath my pillow, and made my calculations. By next evening I should have a shilling, which would be two shillings by the evening after, and then four, and then eight, and so on. It reminded me of the old sum about the nails of the horse-

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shoe. For the time I had forgotten the story of the dreamer in the Arabian Nights. In a year I should have more money than I should know what to do withal ; I should be richer than both my uncles put together. But soft ; what after all was the use of money ? Was not enjoyment the end of man ? If I just ate six of my penny-worths, I could sell the other six, and buy another cake ; redivide it, eat six pieces, and sell the other six ; buy a third cake, a fourth cake, and so on for ever and ever. I had discovered a simple but sure method for living eternally at no cost on toffy. So I ate the first six penny-worths. And then I thought with what anxieties and troubles the pursuit of commerce was accompanied ! Had I not already eaten my six penny-worths ? Consequently, I could not anyways be a loser. If I ate the other six, should I not, without an effort, in one evening have made a clear profit on myself of sixpence ? The specious reasoning was conclusive to a willing judgment. And so I ate the remaining six pennyworths. And this was the first and last attempt I ever made in the way of retail traffic.

Fagging and bullying prevailed at this old school, as, indeed, at all old schools. Fagging

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may, perhaps, with due restrictions, produce healthy moral effects; it may be employed to make dull physical force deferential to intellectual superiority. Bullying is, of course, an unmitigated evil. I doubt whether at any school of any epoch this hateful system was more fully carried out than in the earlier years of my Nine-vite school-days. I was, in all, nearly eleven years at this one school; of these years during the first five I was a Gibeonite, and hewed wood, and carried water; for the next two years I had my fag, and was to some extent an oppressor, and employed and bullied many Gibeonites; and during the last three years, having been, as it were, translated, I ignored all connection with my younger fellow-schoolboys, and lived in the serene contemplation of my own unapproachable greatness and wisdom. And here I would parenthetically remark that the most conceited peacock living might serve as a model of humility, if contrasted with an average member of a senior class in an English public school. To illustrate the miseries endured by the class of Gibeonites, I give a few of the many anecdotes that crowd upon my reluctant memory.

Poor honest Prior, gentle as a sheep, huge as

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a buffalo, slept next to a wolf of a bully, Smith. An evil conscience kept the former awake one night to an unusually late hour; when at length he roused up Smith, to tell him that the day had been his birthday, and that a plum-cake was in his settle, and that a slice was at his disposal. 'Had you told me of this before,' was the reply he heard; 'had you told me of this before, I should have given you a bit.' As it was, the poor owner of the cake had to make it over *in toto* to the wolf, and had furthermore to pass a considerable part of the night on the floor beneath his bed, for venturing to keep over so many unnecessary hours a secret of so important a nature.

A wretch of the name of Turquand came suddenly upon a little friend of mine, knowing the latter to be in possession of half-a-crown. 'Come,' said he, 'I'll give you two-and-six for your half-a-crown.' My friend gave up his money, and received in turn two shillings and six shots. He burst into tears; but dried them perforce, as he was given to understand that any whining on his part would lead to a substitution for the two shillings of two bullets. With a humour prefigurative of legal after-life the bully observed

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that even then he would be fulfilling his offer to the letter.

This same scoundrel gave another instance of his sense of fun in dealing with this same little friend. He gave him an empty common stone ink-bottle—which, when full, would have cost one penny—to keep in charge, urging upon him the greatest possible caution. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes* would have passed through the little fellow's brain, had he known enough of Latin at the time. At all events, the meaning of the words did pass through his mind, and for days the clumsy bottle was carried about in his pocket, and placed at night beneath his pillow. By and by he grew secure, and tired, and careless, and deposited the charge in his settle. Scarcely an hour elapsed before restitution was demanded. The culprit ran to his settle, but the deposit was gone. Trembling, he disclosed the fact to Turquand, who burst into well-simulated weeping, seized the defaulter by the hair, and shrieked: 'You little thief, that bottle was given me by my grandfather on his deathbed; you shall give me five shillings for it, or you'll break my heart!' He would have broken the little fellow's head, if the promise of payment had not been

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instantly given. The money was paid in full, by instalments out of the child's pocket-money.

In course of time the system became intensified in cruelty. The bullies, or *brassers*, as they were termed, were as terrible and as daring as Cilician pirates. On a general holiday, they would be stationed near the gate, when the little fellows came home at evening from their visits, laden with cake and fruit, and rich with small silver coins. The majority of them would reach their beds with pockets as empty as they had left withal that morning. Some cautious urchins would devour all their treasures on the road, and would pay dearly—not too dearly—for their caution or temerity. The evil at length became so flagrant that the cry of the oppressed went up to the ears of the head-master; a special commission of inquiry was instituted; disclosures of the most appalling kind were made; condign vengeance was taken in public upon dozens of the pirates; and the land had rest for years, and has rest, I trust, to this day.

When I look back upon the condition of the school in these years, I seem to have before me a picture in little of old mediæval and older heroic days. In the Hellenists I see the

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studious and exclusive searchers after a Latin-and-Greek philosopher's-stone; in the Brassers I recognise the barons of the middle ages, who had all the halfpence going in their days; and in the little ones I see the burghers who paid the piper, the retainers who did the dirtier work, and the general rabble who came in for the kicks and cuffings. How I should like a return of the old feudal times, if I were only sure of being a baron! How I should like to fight round windy Troy, if I were only the son of a goddess, and could scurry the poor Trojan fellows like locusts into the river, without one of them having a chance of grazing my royal and semi-celestial shins! How splendid it must have been for a great chieftain, gifted specially of Heaven with superhuman shoulders, indefatigable hips, and an impenetrable hide, mounted on a light car drawn by divine steeds, his sword upon his thigh, his shining shield in front, and a great tree of a lance in his terrible hand, to rush careering in among a crowd of leather-clad trembling louts, and prog and pierce and skewer and stab and slash until at length he ceased from very exhaustion, and doffed his helm, and with the fringe of what may be called his frock-

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coat wiped the sweat from off his steaming forehead in the middle of a great slaughter-house of groans and glory!

Our games were singularly rough, and strictly heroic and feudal in their administration of halfpence to the leaders and kicks to the plebs. Two of the favourite games of the nobility were 'Gates' and 'Cheating Running-over.' In all essentials they were at one. For the latter, a small body took possession of the centre of some specified alley in the play-ground, and numerous antagonists crossed through and passed them from side to side. All whom they captured and carried back to the side of starting were pressed into their service. When only a very few chieftains were left uncaught, then the work waxed hot. The middle rank of captors would divide, to let all pass but one, and would close upon him. Meanwhile the other chiefs would hasten to touch their goal; for the game then admitted of their returning, without possibility of capture, to the rescue of their brother. Strange to say, the central ranks were compelled to act only defensively in their captures, while the outsiders were allowed to strike anywhere but on the face.

In the game of 'Gates' a single pair would

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stand out face to face at arm's distance in the centre of some division, and the outsiders would run through them from goal to goal, backwards and forwards. You were considered a prisoner, if one of the 'gates' could hold you, while he or his comrades counted some special number; and thereupon you swelled the lines of the captors. At length some thirty lads would be standing on each side of the 'gates,' and three nobles only would be left untaken. But here each one must pass through the portals alone; as we all, one day or other, have to pass through a gate more terrible. Then would there be a tightening and a girding up of the coat about the loins; girdles would be strapped round, and the runner would be made as slippery as an eel. Finally, but one chieftain holds his own; his comrades are all captured, and transformed into traitorous capturing elephants. He seldom has more than one triumphant rush; in the second, he will career along, with fury in his eye, with hand uplifted to slay; but his force will be by this time abated with continual hammering of the common soldiery, and a brother chief will spring forward, and hold him like a vice, until we count the mystic number; and then the battle is over, and the

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little ones have rest until the rising of another sun.

This game of Gates was a kind of antithesis to the glorious fight at Thermopylæ ; for with us the interest of the game was keenest when the occupants of the pass were multitudinous as the Persians, and the assailants were few and wearied, like the gallant and the deathless men that fell asleep upon a long ago summer's eve, obedient to the laws of their own Lacedæmon.

At Christmas-tide one evening was set aside for feasting ; but the feast was preceded, instead of being logically and Lapithaically followed, by a pitched battle. Each ward of fifty would be divided into two bands, either sailors and soldiers, or pirates and sailors ; the former side in each division being the favourite one of the select few. We had all to practise for weeks previously ; our coats would be tucked up tight to the waist, displaying our knee-breeches and our laughable yellow legs ; the breast of our coat or gown would be thrown open to display a paper-painted mimic shirt, with blue or red stripes ; the soldier would wear a gorgeous paste-board helmet ; the sailor and pirate would have respectively his blue and red worsted night-

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cap; every man would have his wooden sword and shield; but the soldier's device might be a griffin or a red-cross, while that of the pirates, who were always the favourites, was invariably a skull and a pair of crossed-bones.

Sometimes, upon a dark wintry evening, when the separate bands were marching and counter-marching in the grounds and through the cloisters, singing hymns, military, naval, and piratically-diabolic; when the beadles were on the alert in every quadrangle to prevent a *mêlée;* —the pirates of one ward would unite with those of another, and another, and another; gradually, the soldiers and sailors of all countries would be marching side by side, and the school of a thousand lads would be divided into a Spartan cluster of pirates and a Median host of horse-marines. Again and again would they pass each other by, singing loudly their varied Pæans; until at length, what with the measured tramp of many feet, the measured cadence of their hymns, the favouring darkness, and the fun of outwitting the beadles and the upper authorities, the blood of the boys would be up, and a rush would be made from the two ends of the great play-ground, and in the centre, for the space of fifteen minutes, there

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would be charging, and slashing, and hammering on head and shoulder and shield and coward back, as in the olden days before and round windy Ilium. And we left our wounded on the field; for alas! I have seen again and again the beadles carry off unfortunates senseless to the Infirmary. On more than one occasion I managed, by some accident, to pierce right through the enemy's lines to the very outer verge of the battle-field. Whenever this good luck befell me, thinking it would be sinful to tempt Providence I invariably ran away.

The child is father of the man. In the times of the Crimean war, when every man was at heart a soldier, I dreamt on three several nights that I was engaged with the Russians. I regret to state that my provoking dreams led me in every one instance to turn tail. My mortification was always very great on awaking; for I had to regret the lost opportunity of cheaply purchasing a good amount of future self-esteem. I think a good many of those gentlemen who came home upon family business must have been troubled with similar dreams. Some of them, I believe, were seen dreaming on the very battle-field by wide-awake and steady-nerved comrades.

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To render my school-days complete, a great rebellion broke out on the occasion of a half-holiday being refused to us on some saint's day after we had attended morning service in church. At grace before dinner, the choristers 'tuned up,' but no response was given. Nobody would sing, pray, or say Amen. During meal-time derisive laughter flew re-echoing from table to table, the monitors were non-plussed, and the superintendent seemed at his wits' end. After dinner we paraded the grounds with banners inscribed with scurrilous puns on the names of the leading authorities; we stormed the gates one after the other; but, when at length we had succeeded in bursting one open, not a boy was found bold enough to issue forth. I must say that there was a mob outside too thick for us to penetrate; and in the mob were policemen ready to arrest any runaways. Until formally called on to stop the mutiny, our head-master, not to interfere in matters secular, ignored the whole matter. The moment, however, his aid was demanded, he rushed out of doors into the middle of the mutineers, and cried in shrill tones that rang far and near: 'Boys, if you don't go this instant into school, I'll flog a dozen of you!' The cry of

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Achilles on the field after the death of Patroclus was not more instantaneous in effect than the sound of a certain monosyllable towards the close of this sentence. A panic ran through the whole host, and we made in tumult for the several school-doors. When we were all seated in our places, the head-master with all the beadles in attendance went round from room to room and form to form. One very knowing beadle had mingled with the noisy crowd, pretending great enjoyment of the fun; but unobservedly he had put a little chalk-mark on the coats of the most obstreperous; and the owner of every coat so chalked was now singled out for execution. Our head-master had threatened to flog a dozen of us if we did not go to school. We went to school, and he flogged soundly—and deservedly—three dozen of us. Not long afterwards the father of a victim called at the grammar-school door, and, not knowing what he did, sent in his card to the redoubtable head-master. The latter came out, and was informed by the visitor that his boy—who was beside him—had written home a very distressing letter, complaining bitterly of harsh discipline, scanty holidays, press of work, and a score of other

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grievances. 'Poor boy,' said the doctor, 'let me have a private talk with him; I think my reasonings will have a soothing effect upon his mind.' The credulous father sent the boy in with his tranquillizer, and about ten minutes afterwards the son was pushed out at the grammar-school door, sobbing convulsively, and entirely convinced of his errors by the doctor's unanswerable logic. The measures taken were doubtless stern; but a mutiny of a thousand lads is anything but a joke, and our doctor thought that, as with the bees of Virgil, so with the bee-clad children of St. Edward's,

> Hi motus animorum atque hæc certamina tantùm
> Pulveris exigui jactu compressa quiescent;

which couplet interpreted declares that a rebellion can only be put down by the dusting of a few jackets.

Since leaving school I have never—in church, kirk, or chapel—heard readers to compare with our Hellenists. Our dining-hall was, with the exception of Westminster-hall, the largest room in Great Britain unsupported by pillars. All our meals were preceded by a regular service, and that before the supper on a Sunday was a church service in itself. It was on an evening in

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the early autumn, when only the two lights in the pulpit were lit, that it fell to the lot of a pale-faced organ-voiced youth—now a man of fame, high place, and affluence—to read the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. Several verses had been read without any unusual effect being produced. There was as yet the usual accompaniment of shuffling feet, coughs, blowing of noses, and the various and indescribable movements that cause vibration in the air and militate against distinct hearing. Gradually the noises died away into silence, and the silence deepened until it became intense, like a something of itself to be heard; the reader warmed and warmed with every verse; upon his pale and intellectually beautiful face, clearly visible between the two far-away lamps, the eyes of nearly a thousand listeners were fixed, and a sublime shudder passed over the whole assembly as, in tones rich, clear, and resonant, the solemn words were read: 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' I have since heard the chapter read on infinitely more momentous occasions; but the solemn words have then sounded to me as idle words, and I have heeded them not; because at these latter times

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of hearing their full and comforting significance has been very hard to understand.

I was about nine years of age when I entered with luggage as aforesaid the metropolitan school. For five or six years I was on the Under Form ; but in this long interval the contents of my carpet-bag underwent little variation. Some arithmetic and penmanship I certainly did pick up and stow away ; but the result was a beggarly one for the time expended. I have an indistinct remembrance of months and seasons and years of Phædrus, Cornelius Nepos, Ovid, and Xenophon. I never knew any boy expiscate the meaning so far from a Latin fable as to point its moral ; none of us cared a straw about the subjects of Cornelius' biographies, or glanced beyond the unintelligible four lines of the lesson for the day ; Ovid was regarded only as an inexhaustible mine for the composition of nonsense verses ; and the only sentences that were hailed in Xenophon were those, rendered easy by constant repetition, wherein the army is said *thence to march this or that number of parasangs ;* but whither it marched, and whence, or why, not a soul of us cared to know. Xenophon was the special bugbear of the higher

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classes in the Under Form. It was the usual lesson for Monday morning or afternoon. Our masters were unusually severe in dealing with the works of this accursed and diabolical author. The anticipations of their severity lent a superfluous gloom to the observance of our dull and wearisome Sabbaths. On one occasion there had occurred a word, *dromô*, in an early part of the Greek lesson, which had been interpreted *higgledy-piggledy* by the master. The closing part of the lesson was so miserably botched, that the class were, what was technically called, turned down. As they hurried to the door to escape the boot of a clerical pursuer, one little urchin said, loud enough to be overheard: 'Here we go, *dromô*, *dromô*.' In a moment the little wretch was seized by the neck, hauled back into the den, and made bitterly to repent his untimely appreciation of fun and humour.

In each great sleeping-ward there was an average of fifty beds. When the midsummer vacation, or sleeping-out, as it was termed, was just fifty days off, we commenced after a singular fashion to imprint the passing dates upon the memories of the many and the antipodes of the few. Each evening the boy in every ward the

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number of whose bed gave the date of distance was bumped by his companions. Two at a time would take hold of each arm, two of each leg, and all eight would raise him with a will and bump him down to the chanted words: 'So many days, so many days, so many days to Sleeping-out!' The energy of the bumpers became terrible in intensity as the dates decreased, and it was anything but a joke to sleep in one of the first nine digits.

I have already alluded to the gloom and dreariness of our Sundays. Even now I shudder at the recollection of them. Not that I have any fault to find. Quite the contrary. I think that, when children are year after year crammed together in unwholesome multitudes where any imitation of domesticity is impossible, in the heart of a great city where a cheerful walk is denied, the only feasible process with them on all occasions is that of tread-milling. How otherwise are they to be kept out of mischief? The practice is understood and carried out at the great majority of boarding-schools throughout the country. If requisite at these latter, *à fortiori* was it requisite at the great metropolitan school of St. Edward's. There is a meaning in

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everything. Our week-day treadmill was a Latin-and-Greek machine, that ground nothing in particular; but, if you missed your footing, you ran the chance of having your leg broken. Our Sunday implement was ingeniously complex. In plain words, we rose on Sundays at seven, an hour later than usual: O the deliciousness of that hour! We breakfasted at eight, and had our service of psalms and hymns and prayer; at a quarter to eleven we went to church, and were there engaged for a good two hours. Our Bibles were very large, and we had to kneel during a considerable part of the service on hard boards, with no rest for our arms or heads. The misery of the Litany was beyond all words. It was a very Sahara of tribulation. At the end of it we little sinners were miserable enough. On leaving church, we went at once to the dining-hall, and dinner was preluded with a lengthened service of reading, psalmody, and prayer; immediately after dinner we repaired to our wards, and spent an hour in the repetition of catechism and psalms and in the reading of portions of Scripture. At the ringing of a bell we descended to the cloisters, formed into ranks, and marched again to church. On leaving church,

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after a short time allowed for walking in the play-ground, we were rung up into the dining-hall, and a portentously long service heralded in a cold and scanty meal; after grace we waited until the head-master appeared, who would favour our dull and inattentive ears with their third sermon for the day. Immediately upon the close of his sermon we left for the sleeping-wards; but on reaching them we had still another service to go through. One of our monitors would read us a chapter from the Bible and a regular set of evening prayers; and we appropriately closed the Sunday with a singing of the Burial Anthem! Heaven only knows who was the wag that ordained this opportune finale. The oddity was that, while our psalmody was in general carefully attended to by an organist of the highest ability, the air of the Burial Anthem had been handed down by merely oral tradition. Each ward had consequently a variation of its own. That of my own ward was more desultory, fitful, and melancholy than the howling of an out-of-door's dog upon a moonlit night. It seemed always to chime in with my own Sunday-evening feelings of blank, cold, hungry, church-wearied, sermon-stunned, Xenophon-dreading, for-ever-

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and-for-everish despair. I have heard a great deal said in my time of the religious education of children and boys. I, at all events, have no reason to complain. I had as much of religious instruction squandered on myself as, if judiciously distributed, would have turned a whole regiment of dragoons into missionaries.

Above, in treating of our Great Rebellion, I referred to our religious services on saints' days. Our school had been founded on the ruins of an old monastery, and in our costume and in many of our habits there was much to remind one of a monastic origin. However, what had been taken from ecclesiastics at the outset had been with unquestionable wisdom placed under the patronage of the municipal corporation of Nineveh. Accordingly, on sacred days, viewed as profane by the crowd, the civic dignitaries arrayed in scarlet robes would attend public worship in our church. On some of these occasions a bishop preached. These were days of intense excitement. The beadles and church-wardens seemed profoundly impressed with the solemnity of their offices; irradiated with reflected light. The incumbent alone seemed to shrink into insignificance, and dwindle down from a sun into a

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moon, and from a round moon into a thin pale crescent. His very voice seemed to have died away within him, and he read like the ghost of his ordinary self. As the scarlet-robed Aldermen entered the central aisle, the organ struck up a triumphant march, a thousand lads rose respectfully to their feet, and the procession parted off in mid-aisle into two square pews of honour. One felt an almost irresistible British impulse to hurrah. But the spectacle of the Aldermen in the pews calmed down our enthusiasm into a serious repose. These grave dignitaries were not satisfied with a hurried smell into their hats like private men, but, with their piety expanded by their public functions and uniforms, they knelt down, buried their faces, like clergymen, in their ruffles, and for a long while seemed immersed in prayer. During the service, they would rest large books upon the backs of the pews, and repeat the answers in loud voices that sounded all the louder from the absence of the ordinary congregation. They seemed to be praying at us boys; making, for example's sake, a magnificent display of first-class Ninevite piety. I used to think it was no wonder they were so religious, with silk knee-

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breeches on, white-silk stockings, silver-buckled shoes, scarlet robes, and massive prayer-books in hand, every letter in which was as big as a blue-bottle,—not to speak of the luncheon they had already taken and the dinner that was awaiting them in the school committee-room.

Whilst I am in church I would fain record the impressions made on me by a few memorable discourses. Upon the death of the incumbent the curate preached a funeral sermon. His text was: 'We'—meaning the incumbent and himself—'went up into the house of God together.' This statement amazed me exceedingly; for the incumbent had been a non-resident, and had never set eyes on the oldest boy amongst us. I inferred, however, that incumbent and curate had been in the habit of going through the services on week-days snugly and comfortably by themselves. At the close of his discourse the preacher was so overcome with his own eloquence and the recollection of these religious *tête-à-têtes* that he was unable to lift his head off the cushion, and two church-wardens had to lead him by the arms down the pulpit stairs. It was touching beyond words to tell. But the occasion was nothing for pathos to that

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on which our friend, having failed in his candidature for the incumbency, preached as it were his own funeral sermon; dug his pulpit-grave before our very eyes, got into it, and covered himself all over with a mould of words. Everybody wept from great church-wardens and beadles down to common laymen and chits like myself. Not more universal was the world's sorrow at the death of Baldur, or the sobbing of the feathered creation at the murder of Cock Robin.

For many years our afternoon preacher was a stranger, who was an ecclesiastical Paganini, and played or preached upon one string. His hearers consisted chiefly of servant-maids and schoolboys. He appeared to be dreadfully—I sometimes thought, needlessly—alarmed at the prospect of our being all converted to Roman Catholicism. How he belaboured the Pope, to be sure! He seemed to stick him up like a straw-stuffed Guy Fawkes right in front of himself in the organ-loft, and to bowl at him furiously for the hour together. I never heard any one secular man say of another secular man such hard things as this clergyman said of his great ecclesiastical enemy. Some of the words

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he used would have been indelicate out of the pulpit; would have savoured monosyllabically of Billingsgate. How thankful I used to feel I had been born in a true Protestant land, where priestcraft had no power, where bigotry was a thing unknown, and where we all were at liberty to believe implicitly every single thing our clergymen told us! O the blessings of enlightenment to my countrymen!

'O fortunati nimium, sua si bona nôrint, Agricolæ!'

It was not for nothing that our Paganini bowled at the organ-loft; for he was in course of time raised to a post of considerable dignity and emolument through the influence with an evangelical Prime-Minister of a then omnipotent noble Dean-and-Bishop-maker, who in all his selections for places of honour rightly preferred elocutionary powers and Protestant zeal to the respectable but earthy recommendations of industry, patience, learning, common-sense, self-control, and practical well-doing.

In course of time I emerged into the Upper Form. For a while I still pursued my way in darkness, until at length I reached the mathematical school, and an Euclid and an algebra were put into my hands; and I had a sensation

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as though I had been walking through long dark alleys in a subterranean coal-cellar, and that I now through an opening saw the light of day; and I seemed to myself to climb up through the opening and stare at the blue sky above; but ever and anon I would be called upon to re-descend, and rest contented for a while with partial light. And then came my apotheosis in the three years of my Hellenisty; happy, industrious, and, to a very great extent, useful years. Indeed, of these three years I should consider that, at the most, only one would be wasted in the pursuit of useless and unedifying and impracticable knowledge; whereas, of my first six years, as spent in the metropolitan school, the concluding six months might, with good teachers and sensible methods, have produced as good or as bad a result. And at length the time came for my doffing the graceful gown of the Hellenist, and going out into the world an ordinary trousered, waistcoated, behatted mortal. The invisible Policeman came nudging me with his inexorable bâton.

Naked came I into St. Edward's—literally naked; for I was stripped to the skin, and reclad in my blue regimentals. Naked came I in; and

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what am I carrying out in my carpet-bag? Let us examine: one very great friendship and some few lesser ones; affectionate and grateful recollections of three masters and friends; some mathematics and French stowed away neatly and compactly, and a great lot of classics rather confusedly huddled together; and bless me! in amongst the classics has tumbled a deal of alcaic sawdust, hexametrical cinders, iambic chaff, and other intellectual marine-stores. Well, never mind; if these latter are of no earthly use in the outer world, they are highly valued at the university of Camelot to which I am proceeding; so we may just as well take care of them for three more years, and then we may with safety throw them all away into the eternal dustbin.

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III.

COLLEGE MEMORIES.

AFTER twelve years of bareheadedness and blue and yellow bedizenment, I found myself, behatted and betrousered, with carpet-bag crammed as aforesaid, at the gate of the great College of St. Henry, in the old, quaint, picturesque, academic city of Camelot. And now observe, reader, it is not with an obtrusively personal view of publishing an autobiography that in the present chapter or elsewhere I make frequent and direct use of the first personal pronoun. I am of opinion, firstly, that there is a semi-concealed indirectness of speech that is infinitely more egotistic than egotism; and secondly, that a man may be allowed to speak frankly concerning himself, if his words tend in the most indirect way to clear away misapprehension, to expose error, or to illustrate a curious past. So far, kind reader,

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from wishing to obtrude upon you any adventures of my own merely as my own, I would rather forget them my own self. Indeed, I am deeply grateful to my Maker for having blessed me with an indifferent memory; so that nine-tenths of my past life is to me a total blank; and sometimes the greater part of the remaining tenth seems hardly worth the remembering. How pleasant it is to take up a book of Homer, a chapter in Don Quixote, or a play of Shakspeare, and read it, nominally for the twentieth time, but virtually for the first! It is the only kind of food you can eat again and again with an ever fresh relish. A Roman emperor adopted the most bestial expedients to purchase the enjoyment of multiplied daily banquets. How he must have envied a cow her capacity of luxurious rumination! But a man with a bad memory is an intellectual ruminator. Imagine the case of a married man totally forgetting all about his wife once in every twenty-four hours, and falling desperately in love with her every morning over the breakfast table. What a delicious series of recurring little honeymoons! However, such a condition might have its drawbacks; it would make of life a

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succession of jerks, would ruin the nervous system, and bring on heart disease or a sentimental *delirium tremens*.

This digression upon memory has left me for a while standing at the gate of that noblest of all noble colleges, piously dedicated to St. Henry, the many-wived Defender of his own Faiths—five times these as numerous as his wives. I knocked timidly, and a little wicket was opened by a middle-aged gentleman in black clerical costume. There was an expression of calm intellectuality in his countenance, and a tallowy complexion seemed to tell of mental labour and physical repose. To my astonishment this gentleman stepped forward, shouldered my portmanteau, and led the way to rooms temporarily assigned to me,—nay, more, on leaving me, he condescended to accept a trifling gratuity. And yet this dignitary was better off in point of total income than I was then, or have been since, or am ever likely to be. He was only a junior porter, and yet his predecessor had recently retired before old age with savings from salary and houseletting that amounted to a settled income of three hundred pounds a year. I afterwards ascertained that the regular salary

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of the head porter was five hundred pounds per annum ; in other words, one-third in excess above the salary of any of the Government merely intellectual professors in Ireland. The cook and butler also I discovered to be men of great possessions. One quadrangle of the college had been built with the aid of some large sum lent by one of these gentlemen for the purpose. One of the two, also, was maintaining his sons in aristocratic state at a leading college elsewhere, where, beyond the smell of the paternal meat or malt, they associated exclusively with the lucky sons of dukes and earls and baronets and landed gentlemen and mercantile princes and college cooks and college butlers. These lucky lads wear silver tassels in their caps and silver braiding on their gowns, and dine at high table in Hall with Doctors and Fellows, like parlour boarders at girls' boarding-schools ; and are expected at their departure to bequeath handsome presents of plate, as little boys are required to bring with them knives and forks and spoons to provincial academies ; which knives and forks and spoons are seen of the boys' kindred no more.

At no place in the world could a young man

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of independent means have spent a year or two of early manhood more pleasantly than at St. Henry's. There would have been just enough of academic restraint imposed to give a zest to his liberty. But for the lectures and chapel services he would have been entirely his own master ; and even these duties were light enough, and would seem to have been invented for the purpose of dispelling rather than causing ennui. He would have seen daily passing before him a miniature England, with its lords and commoners and commonest. I myself was one of these commonest ; in other words, I had entered as a sizar. Among my fellow-sizars were many youths that have by this time risen to eminence in various departments of learning and science. We, the commonest, had special seats set apart for us in chapel, for fear we should rub elbows with the spangled son of any lucky college butler. We had occasionally to wait at the Hall-door until our wealthier brethren had done feeding. In former days our serfdom would have been even more galling. Within the memory of living men, sizars, or poor scholars, brought the soup-tureens into Hall for the Fellows' table—nay, the tureen had been so brought in by a then living presi-

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dent of a Camelot college, who, on one occasion, upon being severely reprimanded by a Fellow for spilling the soup, had replied, somewhat saucily, that he would stop the practice when president of the college. He had kept his promise.

I remember my surprise when, for the first time, I saw an undergraduate walking about in a Master-of-Arts' gown, with an ordinary unacademic chimney-hat. I naturally supposed that the young man was either muddled with liquor or contumaciously engaged in winning a wager. My surprise was multiplied on learning that this anticipatory and heterogeneous costume was vouchsafed to the youngsters whom Alma Mater—dear, conservative old lady—especially delighted to honour. The youth was a nobleman, son of a minister of state. He was allowed to take a Master's degree almost at the outset of his estate of pupilhood. The pious fiction was admitted, that a young noble with little or no work could grasp attainments whose acquisition required years and years of toil from middle-class or plebeian students. There were, in fact, certain crotchets of Alma Mater that would have set Heraclitus a-laughing or moved Democritus to tears.

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As a true Englishman, I am deeply thankful for the existence of our House of Lords. I look upon it as the source of half of England's happiness. I should like to be a duke, were it only for the amount of pleasure I should be continually giving. I should feel in my heart that every time I listened to a middle-class countryman I was gratifying him; that when I talked with him I was delighting him; that when I grasped him by the hand I was thrilling him with a kind of holy fervour; that virtue was going out of me. I should consider myself as walking about with an irrigating faculty, scattering pleasure and gratification out of my coat-tails like a watering-cart. When by the marriage ceremony I should have transformed some happy woman into a duchess, the bliss hereby generated would not be confined to her, but emanating from her would traverse, in ever-widening concentric circles, the surface of an entire county, and for moons and moons Committees of Rejoicings would unwearyingly discharge squibs and crackers in a delirious ecstasy of plebeian joy. And even when I died I should for a little while be a distributor of gratification. Clad in the uniform wherein I had glittered at

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innumerable reviews, with my still breast sparkling with decorations achieved by the number of my acres, the length of my pedigree, and the extent of my parliamentary influence, I should lie in a solemn and supercilious state, an object of marvel to intelligent spectators, who to a display of fire-works or acrobat skill, almost to the excitement of a prize-fight or a hanging, would prefer the spectacle of a real dead and quasi-pickled duke. I never read without very peculiar emotions that ennobling and truly English couplet, written itself by a nobleman,—

> 'Let learning, arts, let wealth and commerce die,
> But give, O give us still our old nobility!'

The institutions of our great universities are not likely to allow in our youth forgetfulness of, or indifference to, the advantages of rank and money. I have known an able-bodied youth, son of a wealthy and titled father, to be plucked at the Horse-Guards for the most ludicrous blunders in spelling; but this illiterate able-bodied youth wore the usual silver tassel in his cap and the usual silver braiding on his academic gown. I have known an earl to be plucked for a matriculation ordeal through which an aged

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cabman might be made to pass with one year of private instruction; and yet this illiterate lad took precedence in the university church of all the heads of houses, with the exception only of the Vice-Chancellor of the year. I remember once seeing this precedence taken by the youth in question of the burly, autocratic, colossally-intellectual, and Tudor-like President of our Tudor-foundation. I must confess that I sinned against my lord-loving English instincts by giving way to a feeling of morbid indignation, on thus observing youth and luck and stupidity in the heart of an university and in the house of God take the place of honour before mature years, indomitable industry, encyclopædic attainments, and the doctorial hood of a presumed theologian.

Now, reader, if you had your way, you would probably ordain that, in institutions devoted to scholarship and science, genius and ability and industry should wear whatever tassels were agoing, and that vulgar ignorance and plebeian spelling, though found in an earl or the son of a wealthy grazier, should be stigmatized with garret habitation, mean place at board, serge gown, and untasseled cap. Such regulations,

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reader, might work well in America, France, the Pacific Islands, or the moon; but their simplicity would ill prepare young Englishmen for the artificial complexity of the civilisation in which their manhood would have to be passed. You must bear in mind that in our multiplex society literature, art, and science have no recognised position. It is but logical, then, that in our old historic universities the aspirants to scholastic or scientific distinction should occupy the lower platform which, with all their distinctions achieved, they will inevitably occupy in their post-academic career.

But the advantages of St. Henry's were not confined to the wealthy, nor was talent and industry confined to her sizars. Many choice specimens of England's studious youth, rich and poor, were there. Little of direct assistance in their studies was lent them by the collegiate authorities; all really effective tuition was private and expensive; but there was throughout the atmosphere of the place a something that kindled emulation and smelt of hard work and ambition and honour. Whatever distinction was achieved at St. Henry's was achieved against odds, and was valued in the outer world. With all her anoma-

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lous customs and the serious deficiency of sound academic instruction, you could not have stayed a year at St. Henry's without much of mental and of social gain. I envy the youths that now are reaping the fruit of the manifold generous improvements that have been introduced into her intellectual curriculum since the day I left in sorrow her honoured and loved walls.

It was *Res-angusta-domi* that whispered to me the fatal advice of repairing to St. Ignavia, for the purpose of securing a few of her smaller—valuable, but easily-won—rewards. For three years I rotted at St. Ignavia's. I may be said to have there intellectually anticipated decomposition. Nowhere in the world, save, perhaps, in the heart of China, would you light upon so delightful, peaceful, drowsy, comfortable, venerable, useless a caravansera of idlesse. Such institutions in our midst are relics of a dead-and-gone civilisation. They moulder away in a beautiful and ivy-clad decay, and putrefy with a not unpleasing odour, like the odour of church-incense. But, still, they are decaying, putrefying.

I had been for twelve years at school, and at least two-thirds of this period had been spent in learning the ins and outs of two dead languages.

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They were still dead languages to me, although I had gone over a considerable field of their literature. They were similar in my apprehension to that mysterious latter of two languages concerning which Homer occasionally speaks, when he says: 'Mortal men call so-and-so *Tweedle-dum*, but the Immortals call it *Tweedle-dee*.' My chances of success at Camelot depended greatly upon my increase of skill in the manipulation of these two dead tongues; and to a very little extent upon a broad and catholic study of the treasures—historic, philosophic, and æsthetic—that are embalmed in them. But St. Ignavia was a sucking mother with wooden breasts. I had two hours there of daily tuition—one in classics, one in mathematics. They were both over before the majority of my companions took their breakfast. So far as I was concerned, they might both have been superintended by the under-porter; who, by-the-by, was a droll and memorable character, and apparently under a vow of drinking some impossible quantity of beer before his call to another and a beerless world. I felt as though the dial of my days had run back ten years, when in my first classical lecture I heard a

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bearded man called upon to parse '*tuleram*,' and heard the wretch go without a smile through the old mystic, but nearly forgotten, formula of—'*Fero, tuli, latum, ferre.*' I left the lecture-room with fear and trembling; for it seemed as though I were on a retrograde road; that in a year I should be put to pot-hooks and hangers, the year after to the perusal of Red Ridinghood, and take my Bachelor's degree in a frock, with my bib slobbered over.

However, it was of no use despairing until I had fully sounded the teaching capacities of St. Ignavia. I had still the mathematical lecture-room to fall back upon. I had but to strike the rock in faith, and streams of science would well out. Very hungry, and a little unbelieving, I went to a garret in the further quadrangle. The ceiling sloped very uncomfortably down to the ground, some panes in the window were broken, and a dismal fire gave out a little smoky warmth reluctantly. On a dirty deal table were scattered old examination papers, with writing upon one side. Upon the clean sides we were to inscribe the subject-matter of our teaching. After a considerable interval our lecturer appeared, like a man roused suddenly from a night's sleep upon

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his sofa. He had obviously forgotten to shave himself for many days, or was meditating a beard. He muttered in an indistinct voice some puerilities regarding mathematical trifles that had been familiar to me for years. My heart died away within me. For comfort, I examined the backs of the examination papers before me. I found comfort. The papers contained answers to questions in theology. Some youth (who must now have been a parson for at least twelve years,) had been called on to give a life of Eli, and had closed it with these words: 'The aged prophet was seated in his chair when news was brought him of the capture of the ark; thunderstruck with grief on hearing the dismal intelligence, he fell backwards on his own sword, and perished miserably.' The perusal of this document—funny enough in itself—was not very reassuring to me in my condition of mental alarm; for I inferred, not rashly, that the University of Camelot provided for her theological alumni teaching not superior to what in the way of classics and mathematics was given to her children by St. Ignavia.

Our comfortable little caravansera-college contained in all some twenty-seven students and a

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staff of some sixteen or eighteen Fellows. A great many of the latter were non-resident, and all were in receipt from the college funds of over three hundred pounds per annum. The residents, some ten in number, were for the most part of the ordinary cobra kind. They had swallowed their intellectual goat in early life, and were passing through the years of inactivity requisite for digestion. The busy and famous minority were in no way indebted to St. Ignavia for their attainments or their reputation. You might have gone from St. Ignavia's to the Academia Regia by the mills, to the Caravansera Regia on the main parade, or to Thule Academica—the resort of married elders; and here, there, and everywhere you would have come upon little comfortable coils of cobras, digesting all at leisure their mathematical and Latin-and-Greek goats.

Among the twenty-seven students I searched in vain to find a youth of such attainments and ambition combined as the lucrative rewards in the gift of the college would have seemed likely to attract. A few were youths of pleasant gentlemanly ways; some able, but unambitious; others—the majority—of moderate abilities and

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slender attainments; the greater portion were in the possession of independent means, seeking the easiest possible road to genteel dilettante ecclesiasticism; a small minority were illiterate beyond all redemption, but, at the same time, were hearty, likable, hospitable fellows. We were a motley regiment to march through Coventry withal; and such commanders as we had!

After lectures we would breakfast; some few of us would do an hour or two's reading; at noon there would be a meeting for luncheon, and we would enjoy a tankard of good ale and a few comfortable pipes; we would then take a long constitutional, or play at cricket, or row upon the narrow winding river; we would dine at four; retire to a singular mélange of pipes, fruit, and premature port wine; the chapel bell would summon us at six; after chapel we would retire to billiards, and return to a pleasant whist party at ten, where sandwiches and illimitable stores of ale and pipes on pipes would keep us in good humour until very early hours. This delicious and improving life went on season after season. Thus did we work out our academical salvation. We were in a comfortable little inn, with many

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waiters, who, for the respectability of the thing, were thinly but not dishonestly disguised as clergymen.

One of my companions was upon an occasion sent for by the lecturer, to be reprimanded for non-attendance in lecture-room that morning. 'I *was* there,' was the reply of my friend to the question why he was *not* there;—'I was there, sir, and waited for a quarter of an hour, and nobody came; so I went away, sir; and I may as well observe, sir, that your bedroom blinds were down at the time.' Well, well; our lecturer was a good fellow, and merely mistook his calling. He was, after all, but one of those numerous cobra-capellas, mathematical and classical, that may be seen in high places, at board and in senate-house, in the academic city of Camelot, with their goats undigested in their stomachs.

Another curious incident I must relate, in reference to the religious discipline of our little caravansera. One of our waiters, disguised, of course, as a clergyman, was entitled dean, and his peculiar business was to sweep us into college chapel. On one occasion I was sent for, to be reprimanded for non-attendance at sacrament. I pleaded that the rite was a very

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solemn one, and that the amusements of the week previous, and indeed of college life in general, were but a poor preparation for attendance at so esoteric an ordinance. I was merely informed that attendance once every term was enforced by college regulations, and that I must either make my appearance at regular intervals, or stand the very serious consequences. God forgive me! I attended ever after at the regular intervals. And yet I was convinced in my heart that the sacrament was not originally an academic institution, but a holy rite of divine origin from which or into which no collegiate regulation had any right to debar or to enforce.

And further, I would remark that the compulsory daily attendance at college chapel may, perhaps, be desirable upon grounds of moral discipline under certain conditions,—to wit, if the college be permeated by a wholesome atmosphere of mental activity, and if the religious services are such as can be attended by the decided majority of actual and would-be entrants; —but that such compulsory attendance can be regarded merely as a solemn daily homage to Grondê, the great goddess of convention, in any institution where the seniors are for the

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most part to their juniors but living examples of duties neglected and talents misapplied.

There were, however, in our mixed communities certain sections of which every single individual seemed more resolute, energetic, and industrious than his neighbour. From two to four P.M. the aspirants to mathematical honours might be seen, with low shoes and scrimp trousers, in search of dinner-appetites, tearing along the Trumpington road. You would have imagined there had been something explosive in the nature of their morning's work, and that they were letting off mental steam by ultra-physical activity. These men, as a rule, were the dullest of companions, hard as nails, dry as prose. For this they were indebted to their devotion to one unmixed branch of study, that of theoretic analytical mathematics. Their fancies were deadened, their sympathies confined, and even their wits seemed sharpened only for the solution of their own special impracticable problems. Exclusive attention to any one department is, of course, greatly to be deprecated; but some departments are in their nature more comprehensive than others. No dull dry method of imparting classical knowledge can bind the fancy while poetry

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is being read; historians will force some information upon a student; and the pages of philosophy and the daily grammatical analyses will help to open and strengthen the reasoning powers. But the exclusive study of metaphysics tends to vaporize the brain, and mathematics, used exclusively as an educational implement, are apt to act upon the faculties like a grindstone on a carving-knife, when under indiscreet management it communicates a sharp edge at the cost of half the steel.

The river meanwhile would be another scene of uttermost exertion. The eight-oars would be in training, and, if you were in good wind, you might run for a while abreast of one of them, and examine well the faces, the build, and the action of the rowers. You would, I am sure, acknowledge that a man might travel far and wide before he met with finer specimens of physical humanity. In a few cases, brilliant from their paucity, a rower was a reading man; as a general rule, the aspirations of a boating-man were limited to the victory of his club; his talk would be of long strokes and short strokes, first winds and second winds. Were you seated between two stalwart fresh-water mariners

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at a supper-table, you might try your hardest in vain to put a knife in between the intervals of their professional remarks, the nature of which would perhaps lead you to infer that the heads and oars of the speakers had been framed out of one and the same material. These afternoon hours were also devoted by certain others to cricket. As the cricket-ground was comparatively small for the number of its occupants, it required a player to be for ever on the look-out to prevent accidents. At times you would catch on the calf of your leg a ball whizzing as from a catapult, and simultaneously, in the crisis of your agony, you would hear a cry of 'Ball, sir; thank you, sir,' from the cheery voice of some big youth who would be profoundly indifferent if you were set limping for a week. There was something in the open-air influences of these two great amusements that rendered almost all their votaries thoroughly likable and respectable fellows. Low dissipation was incompatible with due attention to training. They betted very little, if at all, upon the issues of their matches. It was usually an outsider that made or lost money upon them.

The worst specimens of undergraduate life were to be sought for in the public billiard-rooms,

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where at the gambling game of pool would regularly meet, evening after evening, the sons of titled and wealthy fathers—youths for the most part as vulgar and illiterate as billiard-markers and stable-boys. In not a few of these rooms would be found a specimen of what may be designated as the *pediculus aleator* or cue-louse, an odious parasite that by dexterity of hand, cunning in the make-up of a betting-book, and toadyism on all occasions, would contrive to eke a comfortable living out of dupes his inferiors in sagacity, his equals in vulgarity and ignorance. The vice of gambling was much rarer at the card-table; but in and about my own time I knew of instances of men of very limited means but of consummate skill that made three hundred a year and upwards at whist.

Our convivial entertainments were more remarkable for hospitality and merriment than for taste or elegance. The waiters on these occasions were allowed the most audacious thievery. Inexperienced youths might be pardoned a little prodigality, but college officials should be strictly watched by college authorities. I remember distinctly a friend of my own being charged seven shillings and sixpence for the simple cooking of

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a hare, with which he had himself provided the cook. It is but fair to add that the outrageous fact when brought before the Fellows led to a thorough reform in our culinary tariff. Our supper entertainments closed with punch and music. The punch was as good as the music was execrable. The vocalists would be in a minority ; and each vocalist would be furnished with at most half-a-dozen songs of the commonest kind ; and these would be welcomed with a never-failing cordiality. A metropolitan actor of third-rate celebrity once paid us a visit, made our punch, drank a great deal of it with obvious gusto, and returned to Nineveh with the idea that the study of Latin and Greek was adverse to the worship of the Muses. On another occasion, a highly cultivated Frenchman paid a few of us a flying visit. He left us with the idea that we were socially the pleasantest fellows, and æsthetically the greatest boors in Europe. I cannot help thinking that English youths would lose none of their frankness, geniality, likability, good-fellowship, love of fun, disgust for cant, if they could be brought to cultivate refining and at the same time amusing accomplishments. Surely it would not be too much to expect in an univer-

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sity of a rich and aristocracy-worshipping kingdom that, when students met together for social purposes, their voices and their fingers might produce more of harmony than could be educed from the frequenters of a Ninevite tavern. I met by chance one student in Camelot who could play the piano, and one that could sing, like an artist; a few that could strum a polka; but in any mixed company it would have been hopeless to make up a singing quartette or trio. In fact, our general music was of the old, merry, pleasant, barbarous school of Signor Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ra-loo. For all that, our musical evenings were to me—I say it not without regret—most enjoyable. I cannot say as much for the mornings that followed. However, great changes are being introduced, I hear. Perhaps, when our children are undergraduates, they will have the harp, sackbut, and psaltery at their more sober and frugal banquets. I trust they will be as jovial and hearty as their fathers, and just a little more refined; that they will sing more and better; that they will drink less and smoke less; and that they will discontinue the fashion now universal in Camelot of spitting on the carpet. It cannot be a wrong thing to wish with grand

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old chivalric Hector that of our children it should be said: 'They are far better men than their fathers.'

I have given the details extraneous to instruction of sixteen years of school and college life. The greater portion of the latter ten of these was, in regard to study, devoted chiefly to perfecting myself, to the best of my faculties, in Latin and Greek composition, prose and verse. I do not think that Methuselah could with prudence have expended as much time out of his abundance upon so elegant, but yet so superfluous, an accomplishment. And strange to say, although I had devoted the greater portion of my sixteen years to the acquisition, for reading and writing purposes, of two dead languages, I had never once from the lips of teacher heard a hint concerning the science of language or the secrets of history which philology has aided to unfold. At the age of twenty-three, after an academic career of moderate success, I stood a trembling novice upon the confines of a strange world. I had a thousand causes for feeling grateful for kindness upon kindness shown to me by my elders in the old school times and the recent college years. But

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I felt in a singular way chagrined, mortified, disheartened. I was possessor of a certain amount of old-fashioned learning, which I found it difficult to exchange into useful and current coin. I was ignorant of the elements of law, experimental physics, natural history, physiology, psychology, political and social science. I was utterly ignorant of the ways of the world. From what I had seen in a place ostensibly devoted to the acquisition of sound learning I naturally inferred that in the world into which I was now about to plunge I should find rank and wealth, however idle and stupid, tasselled in public places, and poor merit, talent, or industry insulted at the social board, or degraded to special and lower benches in the house of God.

I had left school, crammed with scraps of quaint old curiosity-shop knowledge, and inordinately conceited of my broken-china attainments. The conceit within me had been toned down by the wholesome social influences of college life. But in my capacity of student I had worked on and on in the old groove, and I now stood helpless and unpractical in the face of a busy practical generation. I was equipped, as it were, with battle-axe and breastplate to cope with

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rifles and cannon. I had been educated after a particular fashion, not upon the ground that the fashion in question was suited to this place or to this epoch, but simply because youth had been so educated from the days of Augustus Cæsar.

And here I must pause for a moment to dilate upon the miraculous conservatism of mankind. We use a ring in the marriage ceremony, and eat a morsel of indigestible cake, and throw old shoes after a departing pair, because such practices have been in vogue beyond the memory of man; and there is little harm in all this. A godfather gives his godchild a silver mug and a silver knife and fork, because he, in former days, received such gifts from his godfather. The gifts have little of the Christian character to recommend them; but, as they are suggestively typical of traits in our national character, we may as well continue to abide by them. We carry a deceased brother to the grave with ceremonies of the most foolish and ludicrous kind; and there is no very great harm in all this—none at all, probably, to the deceased one. But that, in defiance of the revolution of nearly two thousand years, in assumed ignorance of all the knowledge accumulated during the last three cen-

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turies and accumulating hourly before our eyes; forgetting, or assuming to forget, that we were a new people, with new language, literature, institutions, and religion,—that, under all this complexity of change, we should, until as it were but yesterday, have held on to the monotonous curriculum of instruction followed by a dead-and-gone civilisation, it would seem to me that there was much of evil—let us say, rather, of inexplicable stupidity—in all this. Is it not as though for us, mutton and beef and potatoes and green peas and anchovy-sauce had been foolishly—nay, wickedly—ignored, and we had been fed daily, through boyhood and youth, on the acorns of a venerable antiquity?

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IV.

A TEACHER'S EXPERIENCES.

UNDER the delusive idea that I might one day be called to a fairly-earned college Fellowship, I presented myself as candidate for a Classical Mastership in a great school in Dunedin, and was successful in my candidateship. The position was to a prentice-hand so remunerative an one, its duties were so much to my taste, the Fellowship seemed composed of such cloudlike and dissolving material, and the calls upon my means were so numerous and pressing, that I was led by slow degrees to drop all ideas of a mixed literary and legal life, and to turn my attention more and more earnestly and undividedly to the calling into which I had been fortuitously drawn.

For a long time I was more modest and diffident in my demeanour to my boys than they were to me. Not that they were rude or underbred. They were almost unexceptionally plea-

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sant well-mannered little fellows. But for a while I felt, as I imagine many a young clergyman must feel under analogous circumstances, that I was working at a business of very great importance with a conscious doubt as to my special calling thereto. Slowly and slowly the seriousness of my vocation made itself apparent. I began to examine closely the nature of my work. I was hereby led to discard certain time-honoured manuals, as being, to my thinking, worse than useless; as being impediments no less to the teacher than to the taught. I worked voluntary work with my more enthusiastic pupils, and in leisure hours went through with what were unwisely termed my 'boobies' a great deal of work which to them was, probably, involuntary and Egyptian taskwork. Colleagues of undoubted friendship, kindness, and sagacity, warned me in vain. '*Pas trop de zèle!*' was whispered continually in my ear. I was told —and the warning was justified by the sequel —that I had better do too little than attempt too much; that I should in a short time bring about me a hornet's nest of private tutors, dissatisfied — because relatively unprogressive — pupils, and, what would be most formidable,

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dissatisfied parents of relatively unprogressive pupils. Confident in the disinterestedness of my motives, and vainly trusting to my supposed mental and my real physical powers, I went on and on from innovation to innovation, from enthusiasm to enthusiasm.

After a while I found corporeal chastisement to be less and less necessary for the preservation of discipline. The excitement of the class-room began to be an enjoyment. I mingled with my boys, as did other colleagues with theirs, in the school-yard games; would go with some of them on long Saturday rambles over the neighbouring mountains. The incidents of school-life followed me into my home privacy. My retrospective wistful looks grew fewer and fewer as I followed my scholastic plough, until at length I looked forward only. I became heart and soul a schoolmaster.

One morning I was seated at a quarter before eleven with a senior class before me, when a messenger entered the room, gave a whisper in my ear, and I rose in haste and bewilderment, and on reaching my home found that the relative on whom half my earthly hopes were fixed, who was the last link that bound me to the past,

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and who, in apparent health, had given me my breakfast an hour or two before, was dead.

A very short time after this loss, before my health or spirits had had time for full recovery, I received a letter from the Secretary of our *Schola Nova*, stating that, for certain reasons not therein mentioned, my resignation would be a thing desirable to the Directors. In utter amazement and consternation, I spent a day in calling upon each one of these latter; was informed by many that they knew nothing definite of the matter; by a select few that I had been all along considered as entertaining views or possessing accomplishments too high-pitched for my position; that, in point of fact, the public of Dunedin would prefer a more conservative, go-in-strings, imitative, plastic schoolmaster.

By the aid of influential friends this movement, as cruelly unjust to myself, as—to my honest, if immodest, thinking—unwise to the prospects of Dunedin local education, was abandoned, and I was confirmed in my position. Looking upon the movement against me as a sign of timid respect for uncultivated public opinion wholly undeserving of regard, I continued unswervingly my petty plans of reform. One by one dull manuals

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went on dropping, dropping. One by one my pupils were withdrawn. I began to dread the fate of the horse that endeavoured to live without hay. The Rector of my school, my Colleagues, and the Directors had perfect confidence in my motives for good, my scholarship, my powers of maintaining without effort strictest discipline and of awakening enthusiasm among my pupils. My lads on arriving at the Upper School were pronounced as inferior in *practical* training to none others. I might say more with truth, if I quoted from authoritative words expressed and printed. My heart began to dilate within me. My fellow-townsmen, I thought, were beginning to appreciate my disinterested audacity. I was a great goose.

Meanwhile, upon an early May morning, when I had prepared to leave for my ordinary routine of duty, I was warned by a medical man of impending alien danger; and after some eight days, when the danger was alas! over, I found myself in my class-room with some forty or fifty little faces staring at me as if wondering I could appear amongst them so soon and with so little alteration in my looks after so great and terrible a storm had passed over me.

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By this time I had been, for a short week or two, a father. Henceforward I entered into my work with a single-heartedness that, I am sure, has never been surpassed. I claim no credit for it, God knows. The cause for all was above and outside me. In my home, compassed round about with love and sorrow, was lying in his tiny cradle a motherless boy, from whom had issued some mysterious influence, transfiguring childhood to my eyes, and hallowing my vocation. The once rarely used instrument of punishment was lying somewhere unnoticed, forgotten. But, so far from waxing indulgent, I became more than ever exacting. The progress of each single pupil became to me a matter of painful interest. During my five or six hours of work I sat like a father among a large family of sons; I knew honestly in my heart that I was liked by all the lads around me and beloved by a few; and in my heart I felt that the interests of all were dear to me. But, strange to say, when the bell rang to give us liberty to quit, I first discharged my hours of private tuition, and then found my way to the sea-side, and, with the aid of Don Quixote or a play of Shakespeare, forgot all about my daily duties; and, if a lad of

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familiar visage passed me on the road during the afternoon or evening, I lacked either the courage or the inclination to recognise him.

The nervous tension of this life became at last too much for me, and I had to seek health and strength in a tour for some months. On my return to my old duties, I was again assailed unjustly, cruelly, and unwisely by the old notice to quit. I was informed that a subordinate's duty was not fitted for me; that, if higher duties had been open, they would possibly have been offered, but that I was apparently altogether unfitted to go in other people's harness. 'I wish to goodness,' said one of the Directors, complimenting me in terms far above my merits, 'that you were a little less in advance of your times.' 'I am of opinion,' said another, who had had two sons for many years under my charge, 'that a boy who should pass through a complete curriculum under your care would obtain the best education that Scotland has to bestow. But I still urge your resignation on the grounds that your method of teaching is not in harmony with the habits—or, if you please, the prejudices—of the place.' Surely they who see clearly should guide the blinking

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and the blind. In the very nick of time a Professorship in Ireland opened out to receive me, and the enthusiasm for reform that was considered damnatory of the schoolmaster was held as a token of promise for a professorial chair.

So much was my zeal for innovation resented or misappreciated that, after my appointment was all but ratified, a gentleman (?), of name yet unknown to me, but of considerable standing in Dunedin, wrote *a private and confidential letter in regard to a public appointment* to the Irish Executive, warning them against employing an unsuccessful schoolmaster, and that too although the writer must have known that my lack of success with his own fellow-townsmen had been due entirely to the fact that they had considered professorial and magisterial teaching as essentially diverse, and that I had considered them as modifications one of the other; that they had held to the doctrine that the lessons of children should be fragmentary, discontinuous, jerky, and I to the theory that they should be rounded, flowing, continuous, and comfortable; that they had adhered doggedly to the doctrine of letting well alone, and that I as stubbornly had preached the necessity of change.

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These passing words concerning my own scholastic life are merely penned by way of illustrating how unreasoning, jealous, and vindictive is the conservatism in matters educational of the most liberal and most generally cultivated of my countrymen. They may act as an useful warning to young, enthusiastic, would-be educational reformers. In Dunedin, a city whose chief article of commerce may be said to be instruction, whose local wealth and importance is bound up intimately with the value of this its article of export, with numerous warmly attached personal friends amongst pupils, colleagues, directors, and the public, I found it a continual struggle to maintain myself in my position, and eventually found it a very difficult task to get out of it, and that only and avowedly because I taught upon a new fashion of 'from easy to hard,' 'from beginning to end.'

Directors were specially sent from time to time to inspect me through a lesson. They would report that my method was very pleasant to follow; that they would willingly be listeners for an hour or two; but that it was chatting, or lecturing, or a something between the two; but that, whatever it might be, *it was not teaching.*

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And they were quite correct. I never intended to teach in the ordinary acceptation of the term. I went to school day after day to learn; for school I had been always brought up to consider as a place for learning. I divined as correctly as I could the condition of the average boy-intellect around me, and went with it through every phase of puzzlement, curiosity, intuition, reflection. I learned every lesson set my pupils; read it, marked it, and inwardly digested it. *Non tam magister eram puerorum quàm discipulorum condiscipulus.* Whatever kind of work appeared to me on reflection or experiment as unhealthy, I passed over rapidly or omitted altogether. When reading a Latin poem, I could repeat hundreds of lines without a book, although none had been consciously committed to memory; and my pupils with books closed would take me up at a pause. I could do the same—not from the strength of my memory, for it is weak; but from the strength of my enthusiasm, and that was great indeed—with Greek epic, tragedy, or speech. When we changed one author for another, I forgot with an inexplicable rapidity the long lessons thus unconsciously learned.

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I made use of a Latin or Greek grammar solely to assist my boys in learning by rote the declensions and conjugations. For about two years *I parsed English sentences daily with beginners,* using very simple phraseology, and unfolding very gradually all the little I knew of the history, the construction, the peculiarities, and affinities of our complex beautiful language; and, when the method of dissecting a paragraph and a sentence had become familiar and trite, I transferred it with modifications and additions to the manipulation of Latin or Greek.

By the rule of the institution my classes were open to public visitors one day in every week. On these days I was greatly tempted to amuse the new-comers and grasp at local fame by boring myself and my pupils; in other words, to make a great show of energy on my own part and of knowledge on the part of the lads by asking with volubility and loud voice strings of questions upon matter familiar as their surnames to the interrogated; in point of fact, to make a great noise and smoke at these scholastic reviews by shooting off blank cartridges. Great as was the temptation, I can honestly say I never once gave in to it, but put my questions at random,

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as they rose naturally out of my head and my work; and sometimes these questions were so vexatiously puzzling to my class and to myself that many minutes of silence would ensue; and my visitors would leave the room under the idea that we were all going to sleep like sloths upon a narcotic tree of knowledge, and would go searching about the grounds to find entrance into some more noisy and interesting monkey-menagerie under the control of a more vivacious keeper.

I must own that on these visiting days I always felt, I could hardly say why, in danger. The visitors—who were chiefly women-folk—would sometimes ask questions apparently prepared with the subtly diabolical intention of working my ruin. I remember one lady asking me why her boy stood so low as thirty-fifth on my class. I took a considerable while to reflect upon this insidious conundrum, and at length informed her that the most probable reason, to my mind, was, that in the class there were thirty-four boys who, in my department, were better than her own boy. Within a few days the child was removed, for some unknown reason, from my care. I remember when, on another occasion, a mother came sailing into my room before

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a gale of indignation, towing a miscreant whom she had found battering her darling ; and I was entreated, almost ordered, to take vengeance on the spot. I held a court of inquiry, and the singular and unexpected verdict was : 'Serve him right.' If I was frank, the mother was sensible ; for the lad was left under my charge.

I may as well state that, by imperceptible degrees, the government of my class passed from despotism to constitutional monarchy, and ended in what was, perhaps, for the country in which I lived, too near an approach to a pure and undefiled republicanism.

It is with children as with grown-up men ; a punishment, to be effective of good, should invariably carry with it the consent of the vast majority. All ordinary punishments should be codified ; and remission should never, except for considerations of health, be allowed. It should also be distinctly understood that it is not the Master but the public opinion and the interests of the class by which and to the furtherance of which all punishments are inflicted. On all extraordinary occasions the system of Austrian court-martial should be imitated, by which an offender is tried by one representative of every

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grade in a regiment. Thus, for an offence of any serious nature involving the cause of morality or the character of a school, the court of justice should consist of a Head-master, a Master, and the boy-captain of every class.

The ordinary punishment in an English school for petty insubordination is corporeal chastisement. The pain is usually borne with fortitude, is usually inflicted without personal ill-motive, and a grudge is seldom felt for long. Indeed, I would venture to say that the punishment is, as a rule, condoned by the sufferer before it is forgotten by the operator. I do not object to the system on the grounds of mercy to the boy so much as on the grounds of sympathy with the Master. I am disposed to think that rough play and hard knocks, given without premeditated malice, are good things when got in moderation. I should not be in a great hurry to interrupt what I knew to be a fair fight; it is possible I should walk at a rapid pace to the scene of combat, but by a roundabout way, and should not feel distressed if, on my arrival, the fight were determined in favour of the better man. One great objection to physical chastisement is, that its infliction burdens a respectable and honour-

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able profession with ludicrous associations, and tends in an indirect but most powerful way to lower it in social estimation and recognised rank. Another objection is, that the punishment follows too quickly on the heels of the supposed offence; and in many cases a willing but dull pupil is filliped for the simple reason that his teacher lacks skill or temper, as a disaffected subject has many a time been hanged to atone for the injustice and the blundering of statesman and ruler. Another objection is, that such chastisement is not a natural result to any ordinary breach of discipline. We can see a congruity between a stone thrown at a hat on one side and a smart blow inflicted on the other; but there is no logical relationship between a tingling hand or ear and a defective memory or wandering attention.

The great public schools of France are under central surveillance. A Professor—or Master, as we should call him—can at any moment use the Government screw to carry out his will within certain limits. He can bring to bear upon a pupil or class a terrific and irresistible pressure. If he refrain from using the cane,—a ridiculous and barbarous implement, I allow,—it is because

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he can beat with a weapon like the yard-arm of a ship. I would gladly see governmental aid, sympathy, and surveillance operating through academic agencies on all the educational institutions of my own country; but I am convinced of this, that no Master would retain the goodwill of his pupils, his colleagues, or his countrymen at large, who should venture to bring in external authority to subdue the refractory spirit of his lads. Indeed, I would go so far as to state that such a call for aid in our country would be held as tantamount to a letter of acknowledged incapacity and indirect resignation.

The discipline of a great national school should be in strict analogy with surrounding habits and prejudices. It should be an embryo nationality. If absolutism be the form of government, preceptors should be absolute; if limited monarchy with graduated ranks of society be acquiesced in, the school should have a type of the sovereign in its Principal, of parliament and noblesse in the subordinate Masters and the upper classes; if the Government without be a republic, the Head-master should be the president of his subordinates and charges, should be the *primus inter pares* of free men and free children.

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My native country boasts of its principles of self-government; but its great educational institutions are all under absolute or oligarchic control. For my own part, I am inclined to agree with such as view our constitution as, at present, to all intents and purposes oligarchical; and, until it be found that the new reform bill introduces a decided change, I should see with regret our schools regulated in a manner out of harmony with our leading political institutions. But, if the principle of self-government be brought palpably home to our convictions in the political world, a co-ordinate change will have to be made in the administration of scholastic interests; and no Committee of Management or Directorate will meet to determine matters pecuniary or intellectual, unless its component parts represent all sides. At present, such committees very rarely admit a Head-master, and never one of his subordinates; and would laugh at the notion of admitting one of the boys. Let us hope that, in the fulness of time, a Head-master will invariably take the chair at such meetings; that a staff of subordinate Masters will be always represented by at least one delegate; and that the captains of senior classes will be admitted

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on all occasions where their leisure may be broken in upon, where school habits may be materially altered, or where practices injurious to morality may be the subject of discussion,—such practices, at least, as can only be dealt with effectually through their cordial co-operation. The very working of such an administrative system would be an imperceptible but valuable training for an after-life to be spent amid a free self-governing people.

A great many of the absurdities connected with St. Edward's in my own time were attributable to the deficiencies of its ordinary Directorate. It consisted of men of great wealth and undoubted benevolence. The great majority of them were commercial men, admirably adapted for the regulation of fiscal matters, but entitled neither by early training nor by subsequent experience to deal with so complex a problem as the mental and moral training of fifteen hundred boys, varying in age from seven to nineteen. Although there were employed by this Directorate a great posse of clergymen as teachers of classical and mathematical science, neither their moral character as clergymen nor their scientific character as teachers was consi-

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dered in the slightest degree as entitling them to a voice in the councils of the Institution. Indeed, on occasions where they came in contact with the leading Board, they were treated as a cross between clergymen and beadles; and I must do them the justice to say, that the servility with which they licked the hand of unenlightened authority proved that they were Christians and Englishmen of the good old spaniel breed.

However, the Directors of St. Edward's had this excuse for their arbitrary monopoly of power, that they were extensive benefactors of their Institution, and disabled by their own unselfish laws from reaping benefit therefrom for their sons or nephews. The Directors of the *Schola Nova* in Dunedin were the representatives of many shareholders, whose trivial advances had been wiped out again and again by services rendered their young kinsfolk; and the only duties by which these gentlemen pushed on the cause of education were the important one of selecting good Masters, which they fulfilled admirably, and the unimportant ones of flashing annually in a sheet-lightning of harmless rhetoric in the school-hall, and of entertaining their staff at a subsequent banquet, every

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dish of which had been purchased with the labour of their lungs and brains by the honoured, but bamboozled, guests themselves.

The play-ground, the river, and the cricket-field, singly or collectively, absorb a great share of the time and attention of English boys. A schoolmaster will do well to interest himself in healthful sport of all kinds; but he will be indiscreet if he interfere with play arrangements, if he obtrude his presence too often in places of amusement, or if he join in any game of skill in which he is not himself a proficient. The moral discipline of the play-ground rests almost entirely with the senior scholars, on the well-disposed of whom a Head-master cannot bestow too much of friendly confidence, and with the ill-disposed of whom he cannot deal with too great caution so long as they are only objects of suspicion, or with too peremptory severity so soon as they are convicted of misdoing.

Once a priest, always a priest; once a schoolmaster, always a schoolmaster. Not so,—at least, nominally,—with myself. I have been kicked upstairs. I have been one of the favoured few allowed to emerge from the routine duties and unworthy thraldom of scho-

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lastic life to the more congenial duties and almost perfect freedom of the life professorial. I have, furthermore, had the good fortune to be called to a chair in an university where the professoriate is in full, vital, vivifying action. Have my duties been essentially altered? Not in the very slightest degree. I have been for the last three years fulfilling the identical duties performed for twelve previous years with my senior classes in Dunedin. The only—and a most important—difference has been, that under the designation of professor I have been treated with confidence and respect, and allowed a fair share of spontaneous action; as a schoolmaster, I was checked in every effort for good by the honest but unenlightened prejudices of an outer public, and the officious intermeddlement of an unqualified, unscholastic, unacademic Directorate.

When first elected to my present chair, I had stereotyped in my mind an ideal character of a professor. I conceived that the lectures required of me would be something differing altogether in kind from the spontaneous natural discussion I had for years carried on with the lads whom now, in obedience to the whisper of

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the invisible Policeman, I was to leave, not unreluctantly, for ever. I feared that it would be requisite for me to give elaborate dissertations upon such unfamiliar and not very practical subjects as 'The Architecture of the Parthenon;' 'The Dikasteries of Athens;' 'The Sophists of Antiquity;' 'The Exports and Imports of Corinth;' 'The Greek Particles;' 'The Achæan League.' I considered that it would be incumbent upon me, at least once in three years, to annotate a Greek Play in Latin, to wrangle about microscopic trivialities, and to make facetiously scurrilous remarks in my foot-notes about all previous and contemporary annotators. I meditated wearing black clothes with a white tie until the Amen of my days. I had an uneasy feeling that I was unconsciously a great take-in.

When a man is married, he is in almost all cases surprised at the little difference between his ordinary habits after and before marriage. Young curates after ordination are apt for a while to feel disappointed at the provokingly infinitesimal amount of apostolic power that seems transfused into their being. When a banker is translated to the peerage, he will pro-

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bably reacknowledge his mortality so soon as the 'my Lord' has lost its piquant novelty. For myself, I was reassured to find that the chair I was called upon to fill was just such a chair as I had filled to my own comfort for twelve long years. In fact, I was still what I am to this day,—a schoolmaster. The only difference was one for the worse as regards my duties; for I was now only a teacher of Greek language, Greek literature, and collateral branches; whereas, formerly, I had been, to my own thinking, a teacher of ancient classics in the widest interpretation of the words.

In all our universities we have separate chairs for Latin and Greek. This division would, probably, be advisable in an imaginary land where the schools were numerous and efficient; where the universities were resorted to only by scholars previously well trained and ambitious to add knowledge to knowledge. Under the present deplorable condition of affairs, a man to do work as a professor must stoop manfully and contentedly to the duties of an almost primary teacher. One such professor, with two able and energetic assistants, would do more work upon a single system of his own with Latin and

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Greek classes together, than two separate professors for the two languages, working upon different systems, and occasionally interfering with the theories inculcated by each other.

The youths I had now under my care were of the same age as those attending the two senior classes of my Dunedin school. The majority of them had been very poorly prepared. Their education only devolved partially on myself. They all attended classes in Mathematics, English, French, and German; some of the more advanced, in terms extending over two years, attended lectures on Logic, Metaphysics, Natural History, Natural Philosophy, Law, Political Economy. I had only three hours a week severally with my new pupils, and only some seventy hours a year; and yet, strange to say, I have for the last year been reading with pupils, who learned their elements with me not three years ago, entire books—not extracts—from the best Greek authors, with a facility of understanding on their part that I had never myself experienced, when, between nineteen and twenty years of age, after twelve years of almost exclusive classical instruction, with about six hundred hours of annual instruction

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and supervision in the one great subject, I left St. Edward's for the university of Camelot.

Was it that my new pupils and I were superior in mental powers to my old companions and masters at St. Edward's? Not at all. The pupils were in mental capacity neither above nor below the average. I am unaffectedly and sadly conscious of the limits of my own faculties. But, apart from my own system of instruction, which I consider to be infinitely superior to any system under which I as a pupil was ever worked, my students were now approaching the study of a complex puzzling language at a comparatively mature age, and the various studies which took away from their time were adding daily to the strength, breadth, and subtlety of their intelligences. A great deal—a very great deal—of their success in my room was due to the collateral work going on in the rooms of my colleagues. Other men were labouring, and I was entering into their labours.

I spoke at random, and with a careless presumption, a little above. I spoke of '*my* system.' I withdraw the egotistic pronoun-adjective—which may be done with safety in

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an Essay so full of the first pronoun-substantive —and substitute : ' an approximation, to the best of my abilities, to Nature's system.' In other words, I worked, and work still, as follows :—

Many of my first-year's students come to me utterly innocent of Greek. Fortunately, however, they come to college, not as to a young man's club, but as to a *bonâ fide* place of instruction. For a few weeks they are engaged in mastering declensions and conjugations. This work they must do for themselves. No alien can chew for them this unpalatable food. From the first day, however, I insist that every Greek word should be pronounced in accordance with the system of accentuation handed down to us by the Alexandrian grammarian. So soon as the Accidence is tolerably well mastered, I begin to read some such easy work in *vivâ voce* translation as *The Apology* of Plato. Instead of leading them to believe superstitiously in every idiom of the new language, I can show to them that, in the first page or two of the above-mentioned book, Plato has made numerous and, probably, purposeless violations of the strict rules of grammar. By and by they will hear me read a book of Homer, and they will find

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that Homer, monarch that he was, considered times or tenses as made only for slaves. Later on they will ascertain that the best writers of the most intellectual people of ancient or modern times—poets, historians, philosophers, and orators—wrote all, without exception, with a profound contempt for, or ignorance of, the rules of strict grammatical science. And the wonder is, they will think—and this is a pregnant thought—that they wrote none the worse, but, probably, much the better for their contempt or ignorance. What a benefit it must be, they will perhaps think, to be trained unconsciously in the scientifically inaccurate, but practical, forcible, and elastic use of one's own language! They will gradually come to consider that there are no such things as Greek Grammar, Latin Grammar, English Grammar, any more than such absurdities as English Arithmetic, French Physics, Dutch Electricity. They will begin to see that there are certain universal laws of thought, of which traces may be discerned in the organization of all languages—at all events, of such as they are called upon to deal with,—and will be interested in observing the comparative deflections made from those laws by the lan-

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guages more or less familiar to them. They will come to appreciate the wanton luxuriance, the infinite variety, the careless versatility of Hellenic speech, wherein expression shifts from tense to tense and mood to mood like lamplight on flossed silk or sunbeams on pebbles in clear water; the grave and dignified simplicity, the logical sequence, the measured fugue-like music of Latin; the trim precision, the sharp-cut exactitude, the polished prose brilliancy of French; the uncouth majesty, the rich and deep resonance, the antique air of quaint, stubborn, self-centred German; the reckless defiance of system, the love of anomaly, the borrowing and amalgamating properties, the wayward graces, the pith and vigour of their own tongue; and it will, perhaps, strike them that the leading characteristics of great nations may, to some extent, be adumbrated in the linguistic habits they have unconsciously formed. After a little while I exact, so far as I can exact, three carefully-written exercises weekly. These I examine in the leisure-time of my students, each exercise separately; *and upon these exercises I build almost the entire superstructure of my grammatical teaching.* During the hour of lecture in which I read portions of an author I

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seldom break the sequence of narrative, oration, play, or dialogue, unless a difficulty of an extraordinary kind presents itself; but my students are requested to note with pencil any passage they may find it hard to follow, and to call upon me for explanation at the end of the lecture, either in class, or by themselves.

By this system of endeavouring to interest a pupil from almost the very outset of a difficult study, I have been enabled to achieve what many will think impossible results. I have been enabled to read unbroken books of Homer to youths who, less than two years previously, were ignorant of the Greek characters; and to my second and third year students I have read in English from dialogue of Plato, tragic play, and Demosthenic oration as fast as I could coherently word the renderings; and I have been attentively, intelligently followed. And my fluency on all occasions has been at least as much due to the interest of my pupils as to my own enthusiasm. On one occasion, after going through the speech in smaller portions, I read, after three weeks of laborious rehearsal, to second and third year students the Crown Speech of Demosthenes in three readings

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of two and a half hours each; and I did so, I can say in perfect honesty, not to exhibit a feat of volubility, but to give my lads the best dramatic impression I could of that magnificent and incomparable specimen of ancient oratory.

And this topic suggests to me a radical defect in our classical teaching. While we treat ancient language with a servile and superstitious reverence, we treat our own with unmerited contempt. From the moment we begin to translate ancient authors, we begin to corrupt the purity of English idiom. It is as though, when we took to drink French claret, we should purposely—or purposelessly—deteriorate our own English ale. Under any circumstances it is a long and laborious task to achieve simplicity, purity, ease, and elegance in speaking and writing our own tongue. But it becomes trebly difficult when over years when imitativeness is strong we have habituated ourselves to modes of expression only heard in classic grammar-schools, only written within academic examination-halls. If the idioms of foreign tongues are so crotchety as to be mastered only at the expense of our own language, they had far better be left alone. In reality they are not so. Common

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sense would teach us the absurdity of supposing that a sentence of good Greek can be satisfactorily rendered by a sentence of bad English. Every lesson in a great author of antiquity might be, and ought to be, made a lesson in the vernacular,—at all events, so thought no less a man than Pitt,—and no single unidiomatic expression in this latter should ever be passed by, much less should the use of such expressions be rigorously inculcated. I would not, certainly, advocate an unlimited licence of paraphrase; but I would earnestly deprecate the fashion almost universal of verbal, literal, hybrid translation. If any outsider were only to look over the examination-papers of candidates for high classical honours at any of our universities, and were to peruse the rendering of extracts from Homer, Thucydides, Sophocles, Demosthenes, and others, he would consider that the style of writing before him was exceedingly unlike the modes of speech and writing of his own countrymen at any known epoch; and would wonder that any men could really and truly admire the works of writers that read so grotesquely and ungracefully in an alien tongue.

Any one who has had much of experience in

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matters linguistic will agree with me that it is not twice as hard to learn two foreign languages as to learn one; and that still less is it four times as hard to learn four. In fact, as the number of languages moves on in a rising arithmetic series of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 . . . , the difficulty of acquisition varies in a descending geometric series such as . . . 16, 8, 4, 2, 1. Upon these considerations I think it would be no hardship to exact of all candidates to classical masterships in first-class schools a thorough knowledge of Italian, French, and German. Italian and Latin should be, as said elsewhere, considered as indivisible; and French and German, if taught by highly educated native scholars, would be invested with a dignity which hitherto has been denied them in the estimation of young English students. A German may occasionally master our pronunciation and appreciate our national peculiarities; but this is very rarely the case with Frenchmen. Typical characteristics cling to them as to cats with a tenacity that defies all modifying influences. The great proportion, also, of French masters are half-illiterate men; and would, probably, be but genteel hairdressers in their own land. They have only an outside book-cover

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knowledge of their own literature, and set a preposterous value upon Parisian accentuation, the glib utterance of conversational commonplace, and other gimcrack conventional accomplishments. After ten or twenty years of misery, as supremely ignorant and as complacently disdainful of the people they are quitting as on the day of their arrival, they carry home with them their hoarded savings, and spend the autumn of their days amid the bustle and excitement of a Frenchman's earthly Paradise.

As there are no limits to the working powers and courage of our graduates, there can be no doubt that, if a knowledge of modern languages were exacted of them and well remunerated, they would be found able and willing to meet the call. Indeed, at my own—in matters intellectual, admirable—*Schola Nova* at Dunedin, *all the classical masters without exception were qualified in this desirable way.* If such were generally the case—and alas! it is very rarely the case in the best schools of England—our own young scholars would gradually push out of the scholastic market all foreigners except the highly cultivated, who would hold their own to their and our advantage. This elimination of foreign rubbish

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would be a great gain to our boys and girls, and a great gain to the profession of teachers, whose rise in general estimation must depend mainly, if not exclusively, upon the increased extent of their useful attainments and the corresponding value of their practical services; who, before they can command the respect of all around them, must use Self-respect as a guide upon the road to find Self-improvement; and these twain, when met together, will cross arms to lift them up to the desired pedestal of Self-assertion.

This last word recalls me to myself. In this Essay, as in two others, I have made an unusual sprinkling of 'I's' and 'me's.' Had I been preparing articles for a monthly magazine, an *alias* might have been used without difficulty on my own part to obviate harsh criticism from the reader. But I am writing, not for æsthetic, but for useful purposes. It may possibly be found that I have little that is new to tell; but whatever I have to tell must be told to a very great extent with apparent egotism. Were I a chemist, a geologist, or a political economist, I might bring before readers or hearers the results of years of study upon subjects altogether impersonal. They might listen to my words, or gaze upon my dia-

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grams, or watch my experiments, and care little what manner of man I personally was. But the subject of education is one that penetrates into every cranny of every one's life. Not a man alive but has something to say upon the universal subject. Indeed, in regard to the right methods of training a child, governing a kingdom, and poking a fire, it may be said that every one man considers himself as knowing more than the rest of mankind put together. There is more of the scientific element, I own, in right education than we are disposed to believe; but, after a few broad, simple scientific principles have once been laid down and acquiesced in, the working part must be left to able and honest hands, and idiosyncrasies must be allowed a large margin for free action. No man can appeal to a large audience on the topic now before us with the presumptuous idea that what he can state should be regarded as comprehensive or final. I have stated honestly my experiences as boy at school, as youth at college, as teacher at school and college, and have added a few theories as the fruit of my experiences. I have egotised, however, out of sheer modesty; from a disinclination to discuss a subject of

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universal interest in terms of impersonal and dictatorial preachment. I shall be satisfied if here and there a suggestion has been made that will hereafter tend in the least degree to overthrow scholastic superstitions, to smooth the course of school life for children, and to raise to its due level in social rank and to second in its claims to the right of at least partial self-government the respectable, but insufficiently respected, profession of which I am a humble but enthusiastic member.

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V.

OUR HOME CIVILISATION.

IT has been of late years the glory of bishops to multiply churches, and rain down curates upon a thirsty metropolis. For my own part I should like to dot the land all over with ample, high-ceilinged, well-ventilated schoolrooms, spacious play-yards, level cricket-fields, free libraries, free museums, and to go out into the highways and the hedges, and lay hands on all bird's-nesting vagabonds, and compel them to come in. 'There is nothing like leather,' says the cobbler. We are all cobblers. But still I grant that we might possibly have too much of a good thing. The world would, perhaps, be none the wiser, and it certainly would be a great deal the duller, if of two men in every dozen one were a parson and the other a schoolmaster. God's ways are not hurried. We live only through our own little day in the long year of human progress. We sow the seed in honesty ;

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but alas! too often, in our foolish curiosity, we scratch up the mould to see if the seed be growing. Faith is a duty, because it is a necessity. In a diversity of ways may seed sown grow up: rapidly, on favourable ground; more slowly, but charged, may be, eventually with equal fruit, on sunless spots.

Many a noble nature has, in a strange way, owed, or seemed to owe, nearly all its nobility to ill-usage and bad example in early years; has emerged unselfish from depths of selfishness; pure from out a den of impurity; has been, as it were, shunted on to the right path by the continual pressure of alien depravity. Many of our most carefully nurtured intelligences mature and decay, bearing no fruit, leaving behind no record, pass over a wilderness of inutility into oblivion. Many of our greatest and best have done their work with no thanks due but to their own industry, courage, sagacity, and integrity. The father of the American Republic is not the only instance of a great man's having entered upon active life with a mental training limited by the old familiar trio of accomplishments—reading, writing, and arithmetic. This incomparable man certainly would have been none the less

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great had he passed in boyhood and youth through a lengthened course of well-regulated and well-timed literary and scientific studies; but perhaps his head was, at the outset, all the clearer from the absence of those cobwebs which modern scholasticism spins in the nooks and corners of young brains. An army cannot take the field provided with too good a commissariat; but its efficiency may be neutralized by lumbersome baggage and superfluous camp-followers.

Our first mother was tempted by the fairness of the fruit that hung upon the tree of knowledge. And no wonder; for the fruit is unutterably beautiful. When young lips are watering to taste it, we seek foolishly to cure them of their natural longing by presenting them with apples of which the rinds have been discoloured and rubbed over with unpalatable medicaments. At one time, when a patient was ill with fever, we closed the windows of his chamber and denied him draughts of refreshing water; but we perfumed his room by artificial means, and supplied him liberally with prepared potions. We are trained to love the semblances of knowledge; we value accomplishments because they are difficult, tedious, costly of attainment, and because

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their attainment commands the admiration of the ignorant many. Self-love pushes off from us the obtruding suspicion that we may have wasted years in the pursuit of shadows. For one case of faculties impaired by disease, or obliterated by death, how many there are of faculties dulled or extinguished by the honest efforts of the mill-horse schoolmaster!

Am I an advocate for the abolition of curates and schoolmasters? would I fill the month with week-days, and the year with vacation-time? God forbid! I only see a vast amount of ignorance and vulgarity in our midst; thousands of schoolmasters I see engaged in hardening or increasing heaps of pestilent prejudice; and too often I see foolish and exclusive pride employing the curate's hands, like a pair of tongs, to deal with what is really or supposedly mean, unsightly, offensive. What I would advocate is, that we should all join hands together in improving the schoolmaster and curate, and then co-operate with them heartily in their noble work of scattering enlightenment.

Of the three great divisions of the United Kingdom, it is over Scotland that the light of civilisation is most generally and equably dif-

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fused. The Minister and the Schoolmaster have both had their share in bringing about the result; but the work of the latter has been of unmixed benefit, while the unreasonably exhaustive demands of the former upon the spiritual and mental faculties have oftentimes resulted in serious and lamentable physical and moral reactions. England is the land of paradoxes. One of the pleasantest, most lovable and admirable characters in the world is that of a well-educated, well-conditioned, widely-travelled English gentleman. In such a character you will see an easy, negligent, spontaneous refinement, a still and quiet courage, a pride untouched of vanity, a quick and delicate sense of alien rights blending harmoniously with a deep-seated self-respect. In the neatness, the cleanliness, the comfort and aptitude of arrangement, the simple but unstinted hospitality of farm-life, there breathes, as it were, the aroma of a venerable albeit homely civilisation; of a prim, respectable, kindly, but prosaic Arcadia. Other European nations may surpass us in the production of ingenious scoundrels; but no nation can produce a creature to vie with our Cockney in vulgarity; as has been re-

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cently shown, with our saw-grinder in brutality; in bovinity with our clodhopper. But, if England is a land of paradoxes, Ireland is a land of paradoxes gone mad. Her children give the lie indirectly to the old *ingenuas didicisse* couplet of Ovid, by being the best-mannered and worst-educated people in the world. The most respectable section of her population is undoubtedly her peasantry, the members of which are, as a rule, and under moderately favouring circumstances, moral, industrious, affectionate towards kindred, kindly towards neighbours, and saving to the point of parsimony. Her higher and lower noblesse are too often imitators —in some cases very contemptible ones—of English prototypes; her professional and commercial men, down to a low grade, are given to ape the fashions, manners, and amusements of the noble and proprietor. This unwholesome ambitious imitativeness is due to a variety of causes that a diffusion of sound political, ethical, and social teaching might, in course of time, neutralize, modify, or annihilate. At present, the land is under a government that has borrowed all the outer trappings of royalty, unaccompanied by its dignity, respectability, or permanence.

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Poor Ireland sees only the sunlight of royalty at most distant intervals, and then only for briefest periods; as a general rule, she is dimly illumined, without being in the slightest degree warmed, by the reflected radiance of a vice-regal moon. In accordance with astronomic usages this moon shows only one face; and that face is a Protestant one. No people are more naturally intelligent than the Irish; and yet learning and mental power are little esteemed among them, except when displayed in some striking manner at the bar, on the bench, or in the House of Commons.

Scotland has owed much to the fact that the vigour and common-sense of her working classes were found strong enough to neutralize and over-ride the selfishness of what, with a very few splendid exceptions, was an unworthy unnational nobility. Ireland will be equally prosperous when her children shall have thrown off their servile admiration for rank and place, and their passion for the useless, expensive, and, in some cases, demoralizing sports of wealthy idleness; shall spend more upon the children in the schoolroom than on the horses in the stable; and shall come to respect, cultivate, and reward

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industry, ability, and honesty. It would be none the worse for her if the members of her three great religious sections would be content to journey severally on their own ways to heaven without throwing stones at their brethren as seen walking upon parallel, but seemingly divergent, pathways. In plain words, it would be a blessing to Ireland, if her children would seek to save their souls in a more common-sense way; would cultivate less the sterile plant of religious acrimony, and unite to cultivate ever more and more the sustaining plants of self-reliance, energy, industry, and national brotherhood. However, so long as absentee proprietors draw cruelly and exhaustively upon her resources, so long as the great majority of her journalists and parliamentary representatives advocate the claims of sectarianism in preference to those of nationality, so long as a favoured alien church irritates the holiest feelings of seven in ten of the population, so long, in all probability, will the emissaries of Chaos impede the pioneers of steady, gradual, constitutional progress, and so long will social and religious disunion prevail among her children, together with a general indifference to things noble, useful, and elevating,

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and an universal worship of things fortuitous, useless, ephemeral.

Are we, then, the subjects of her Britannic Majesty, a refined and civilised people? Let us answer the question indirectly.

There are agricultural districts in Scotland where the illegitimate births are to legitimate ones in the ratio of one to ten. In other words, these agricultural districts vie in unchastity with Vienna, the most licentious capital in Europe. I have myself known the numerous workmen in a Glasgow factory visit Edinburgh for a holiday, and leave late in the evening to return, drunk almost to a man, after having spent an entire summer's noon and afternoon and evening within some three favourite taverns, in little wooden boxes impervious to the light of day, drinking whisky by dim gaslight. And yet all these men would be efficient workmen in receipt of good wages. The majority of them would return home to wives and children. Happy wives! blessed children! These wives and children would be indebted for the periodic bouts of intemperance on the part of husbands and fathers to the dearth of open-air amusements, the lack of cultivated tastes, and the unnatural and

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demoralizing regulations of a cherished Sabbatarian asceticism.

The love of sport is natural to all Englishmen; but cricket is, perhaps, our only pastime the intrinsic interest of which calls in neither the incentive of betting nor the stimulant of drink. What spectacle can be more inspiriting than that of the rowers in a boat-race, or of the runners on a race-course; more dispiriting, more nationally humiliating, than that of the shrieking, vulgar, betting-men on the steamer or the grand-stand? When a posse of our middle-class respectabilities start upon a pleasure expedition, on arriving at a convenient spot they fall immediately to eating and drinking. From the majority of such picnics our women return home in low spirits, and our men under the influence of drink. If they dance after their repast, the men are never graceful in their movements; occasionally they are indecorous and rude. If they sing on their way home, the words and tunes will usually be borrowed from those never-to-be-sufficiently execrated nigger minstrels, who appear to have been sent into the world to make, if it be possible, our English taste in music more unutterably vulgar than it was before. There are few

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nations in the world that know how to make money better than ourselves; there is not a single people in the world that understands less the philosophy of enjoyment.

In Ireland, in its most prosperous and thriving corner, we shall find that men of ancient birth, extensive means, claiming, rightly or wrongly, the respect due to high, mental, and religious culture, celebrate year by year, or countenance others in celebrating, the anniversary of what to the whole civilised world appear, if known at all, to have been but petty and insignificant actions, in which one set of Irishmen were victorious some two centuries ago over another set amongst their own countrymen. It is sufficiently barbarous to erect conspicuous pillars in our capitals, to build metal-bridges over rivers, to station huge cannon in our market-places or at the extremities of harbour-piers, by way of commemorating victories over a gallant foreigner; but it is unspeakably ungenerous and barbarous, not to say stupidly suicidal, for any one class within a country to be for evermore stirring up the smouldering embers of an old and now meaningless domestic animosity.

Two of the chief pioneers sent out, or gone out

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of their own accord, to improve the barbarism amongst us are the ecclesiastic and the schoolmaster. A great amount of useful work is done by both ; but more work could be done by them ; and, at the same time, of the work already done much might with profit be altered, and much left undone altogether.

The chief lesson impressed upon the children of English peasants is respect for wealth and rank,—for what are called, in every detestable variety of phrase, 'their betters,' 'the upper classes,' 'their superiors.' The poor child is brought up to grovelment ; to crawl, as it were, with his belly on the ground. His fingers at length clutch spasmodically at his foremost tag of hair. Never a word does he hear of the beauty, the nobility, the grandeur of self-respect. After years of gross physical feeding, a moral feeding more gross and debasing, and no mental feeding whatsoever, the creature solidifies into the bovine lout that grins through a horse-collar, that swills small beer by the gallon, or that disgraces his manhood by accepting in public places nursery prizes for good conduct at the hands of a white-waistcoated, contemptuous, unapproachable fellow-countryman. Through some such

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training must those two children, officially reported as 'of average intelligence, and of eleven years of age,' have been passing, who, in reply to the questions of an Assistant-Commissioner,—'What is thy duty towards God?' 'What is thy duty towards thy neighbour?'—answered, severally, on their slates as follows:

'My duty toads God is to bleed in him, to fering and to loaf withold your arts, withold my mine, withold my sold, and with my sernth, to whichp and to give thanks, to put my old trast in him, to call upon him, to onner his old name and his world, and to save him truly all the days of my life's end.'

'My duty tords my nabers, to love him as thyself, and to do to all men as I wed thou shall do and to me, to love, onner, and suke my farther and mother, to onner and to bay the Queen, and all that are pet in a forty under her, to smit myself to all my gooness, teaches, sportial pastures and marsters, to oughten myself lordly and every to all my betters, to hut nobody by would nor deed, to be trew in jest in all my deelins, to beer no malis nor ated in your arts, to kep my hands from pecken and steel, my turn from evil speaking, lawing, and slanders,

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not to civit nor desar othermans good, but to laber trewly to git my own leaving, and to my dooty in that state if life, and to each it is please God to call men.'

Within the last twenty years, so many new openings have been made to industry and ability, that the Church has suffered some fifty per cent. in the quality of her average entrants. While the age is growing daily more and more inquisitive and critical—at least as regards the educated classes,—the general teaching of the pulpit is growing, week by week, more and more stale, flat, unprofitable, and wearisome. How often, with a host of fellow-victims, have I fallen into temporary inanition before a clerical Samson as he wielded the old, simple, but formidable weapon! How many times I have heard a sciolist priestling cope a vapid sermon with a prayer that God would imprint the recently uttered bagwash upon the hearts of all his hearers! How I have shuddered to think the prayer might by any possibility rise higher than the ceiling!

Whilst our young ecclesiastics are being drawn from lower grades of intellectuality, what is being done by and with our schoolmasters?

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We have seen what crab-like movements may be made by the Heads of our great public schools; how they can shut their eyes to common-sense, and dance a backward dance to the marvel of the world, the indignation of the enlightened, and the cost of their disciples and subordinates. The following is a summary of the evidence presented by the Commissioners of Education in regard to our teaching in private schools—borrowed from the abstract of Mr. Herbert Skeats :—

Mr. Frazer, after saying that 'the great majority of the private schools in his district are kept by most respectable people, some of them by very admirable men and women,' adds, that 'the teachers have often no special fitness, or, at least, no fitness that is the fruit of preparation or training for their work, but have taken up the occupation in default of, or after the failure of, other trades. . . . . Most of them have picked up their knowledge promiscuously; several combine the trade (!) of school-keeping with another.'

'The general testimony,' says Mr. Hare, speaking of Hull, Yarmouth, and Ipswich, 'goes to show that most private schoolmasters

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are men who have failed in other pursuits, and that many of them eke out a subsistence by doing whatever odd jobs chance may throw in their way. One witness specifies quondam barbers, sailors, soldiers, and millers, as turned to school-keeping, and represents schoolmasters as being also interested in ship-owning or engaged in rate-collecting. . . . . I became acquainted with one whose general intelligence enabled him not only to keep a day and evening school, but also to cater for a country newspaper, to conduct correspondence for persons who are no scholars, and to make the wills of testators who are penny-wise and pound-foolish.'

Mr. Cumin's experience in Bristol and Plymouth was similar. Of the private schoolmasters in Devonport, one had been a blacksmith and afterwards an exciseman, another was a journeyman tailor, a third a clerk in a solicitor's office, a fourth (who was very successful in preparing lads for the competitive examinations in the dockyard) keeps an evening school and works as a dockyard labourer, a fifth was a seaman, and others had been engaged in other callings. Of some of these Mr. Cumin's informant spoke in favourable terms.

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In none of the districts, however, were these features so strongly marked as in London. Dr. Hodgson found evidence to justify the assertion that 'none are too old, too poor, too ignorant, too feeble, too sickly, too unqualified in any way or every way, to regard themselves, or to be regarded by others, as unfit for school-keeping. Nay, there are few, if any, occupations regarded as incompatible with school-keeping, if not simultaneous, at least as preparatory employments. Domestic servants out of place, discharged barmaids, vendors of toys or lollipops, keepers of small eating-houses, of mangles, or of small lodging-houses, needlewomen who take in plain or slop work, milliners, consumptive patients in an advanced stage, cripples almost bedridden; men and women of seventy and even eighty years of age; persons who spell badly (mostly women, I grieve to say), who can scarcely write, and who cannot cipher at all.'

Mr. Wilkinson's account of the matter is very similar. He says that 'the profession (!!), as such, hardly exists, and that it is a mere refuge for the destitute,' and enumerates 'grocers, tobacconists, linendrapers, tailors, attorneys, painters, German, Polish, and Italian refugees,

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bakers, widows or daughters of clergymen, barristers, surgeons, housekeepers, ladies'-maids, and dressmakers, as being amongst the teachers of private schools.'

Mr. Winder says that hardly any one is brought up to the business unless he suffers from some bodily infirmity. *He called, without design, on five masters successively, all of whom were more or less deformed; one, who taught in a cellar, being paralytic and horribly distorted.*

In Ireland the Catholic collegiate schools are the only ones that can lay claim to impersonal ownership and an approach to national aspiration. There are a few private Protestant boarding-schools of high character, and here and there a foundation school may be indebted for its good working order to the energy and ability of its passing head-master. Even in Ulster, where education is chiefly valued, the middle schools are in a wretchedly unsatisfactory condition. And yet there are funds scattered wastefully throughout the land—*not to speak of twelve hundred unemployed Protestant clergymen*—that, if wisely administered, would amply meet all educational requirements. A very intimate friend of mine was speaking to a schoolmaster who had house,

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glebe, and a good income upon what is called 'Erasmus Smith's Foundation.' 'Well,' said my friend, 'and how is your school getting on?' 'Admirably,' replied the schoolmaster; 'I haven't a single pupil.' 'What!' said my friend, taken suddenly aback, as though he had been struck in the stomach; 'not a pupil? and are you glad of that?' 'Come, come,' said the other, 'you're a man of the world, and you'd be glad enough too. I've an independent income; and, if there are no boys to teach, all the better for me.' The schoolmaster in question is not a man of the world; he is a clergyman—a man of God; and happily for himself has a great deal of spare time on hand to spend in meditation upon the things of eternity.

Whilst, however, the middle schools of Ireland are in a deplorably and disgracefully low condition—thanks to religious bickerings!—Ireland is better furnished than, perhaps, any country in Europe with the means for carrying out elementary and academic instruction. If her Model Schools, National Schools, and Queen's Colleges were freed from the deadening influence of direct governmental control, were interlinked harmoniously with one another and with older

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institutions scholastic and academic, and were supplemented by a system of intermediate secular grammar-schools open to efficient, trustworthy, academic inspection—and the means for providing all are already in existence,—Ireland would be the best educated country in Europe. But a man may have excellent clothes in his wardrobe, and decline to put them on. I repeat that Ireland might, if she pleased, be exceptionally well provided with all the requisite machinery for universal instruction. Will she make use of it? I fear not; at least, for a long, long time. Priest and clergyman and minister and layman will be found to warn childhood, boyhood, and youth from the perilous soul-contaminating influences of mixed-secular pothooks, heretical arithmetic, unapostolic trigonometry. And there will be thousands ready to give attentive ears to this honest, well-meant, ridiculous, anile, and most mischievous drivel.

Alas! alas! for the disastrous effects of internecine religious discord.

No educated European would quarrel with a Lascar sailor concerning the properties of a right-angled triangle. The consciousness of his own knowledge and of the other's ignorance would

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render a demonstration of ill-temper superfluous and ridiculous. To throw acerbity into a discussion, it requires a parity of knowledge or a parity of ignorance. The acerbity reaches its maximum when the questions at issue are such as, for their solution, demand the combined aid of experience and time, or of experience and eternity. Thus we find that physicians quarrel over the mysteries of our carcases with a rabidity only surpassed by that with which ecclesiastics quarrel over our souls. Oh for the immeasurable mischief done and a-doing by well-intentioned ill-regulated zeal! By which of these three agencies, reader, do you think most harm has been inflicted on our kind,—tobacco, alcohol, or dogmatism?

These melancholy reflections would force themselves upon you, were you to saunter through the streets of Dublin. Not one *bonâ fide* publisher would you find in the metropolis of a land containing six millions of inhabitants. The windows of the fashionable book-shops would display to you little else than recent religious publications, in whose pages you might wade through twaddling sentiment, Elizabethan controversy, and mischievous fanaticism; but

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you might turn over a bale of recent literary issues without lighting on one recent native work of masculine thought, solid scholarship, or broadly national aspiration. The native medical and mathematical works would, however, honourably remind you that you were the while within bow-shot of an ancient and richly-endowed university. Is it that there is a lack of ability in the land? In all Europe there is not a people of quicker readier intelligence; but alas! in all Europe there is not a land upon whose bowels feeds so mercilessly the devil of religious discord. One great stumbling-block in the way of fair and vigorous action against all ecclesiastical interference in secular education, in the way of the intellectual regeneration of the land, is the existence of a Protestant establishment in a Catholic country. The truth is, England, after using the Reformation as a crutch to prop up her own political independence, made use of it as a staff to knock a sister on the head.

An Irish proprietor of great wealth and influence observed recently to another friend of my own, that the new Reform Bill would be the ruin of the country, as, in the choice of a representative, electors would look henceforward

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more to ability than to property. I can scarcely hope that electors will, at least for a century or two, display such hitherto unprecedented common-sense; but I am convinced that the results of such conduct would belie the prognostications of the desponding squire. If, during the next twenty years, a tithe of the jealous care that for centuries has guarded the rights, the privileges, the amusements of property, were expended upon the physical, moral, and mental culture of childhood, boyhood, and youth, we might then be enabled to give a direct and affirmative answer to the question:—'Are we, the subjects of her Britannic Majesty, an educated, refined, and civilised people?'

There are four countries in Europe through which education is more or less widely diffused,—Scotland, Switzerland, Holland, and Prussia. Perhaps it would have been as well for the neighbours of the latter had she been less enlightened, as enlightenment in her case has paved the way for her ambition. However, such is the condition of ignorance or dishonesty in which Europe is found after eighteen centuries of Christianity, that she requires some thirty millions expended annually on naval defences, and nearly four

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millions of non-citizen, non-self-supporting, military policemen kept permanently on foot, to keep the peace amongst her children. Nay, so universally spread throughout Europe is the pestilent war-spirit, that for years past very few improvements in mechanism have been recorded, saving in the construction of quasi-miraculous engines for the rapid destruction of human life; and titles and ribbons have been bestowed by civilised monarchs who might have taken a wholesome lesson from the treatment of Perillus by the Syracusan Phalaris.

This is the natural, at all events the actual, result of that universal policy that puts prominently forward things secondary or indifferent, and treats as by-work questions of incalculable importance. I have no hesitation in asserting, that a more important question even than such obviously important ones as concern the administration of justice, the regulation of the rights of property, the raising of the revenue, the maintenance of order, the protection of our colonies, the defence of our own shores; more important a hundred times than the consideration of means whereby lands, wealth, and titles may be transmitted to a remotely distant pos-

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terity; a thousand times more important than the discovery of effectual means whereby hares, partridge, grouse, woodcock, hand-fed pheasants, and other fowl may be preserved to recreate our weary legislators; tenfold more important than all put together is the question: 'How shall we, physically, morally, and mentally, train our children,—our boys and girls, our youths and maidens?' For, if this one comprehensive problem be thoroughly and satisfactorily settled, other questions of domestic state-policy will have lost all the greater share, some the entirety, of their difficulty.

In Scotland, a rambling unemployed lad may be forced into an industrial school, where he will be supplied with wholesome practical instruction. In England or in Ireland the poverty-stricken chits in the streets are as free and ignorant as the sparrows. But it is not economy thus to foster ignorance and idleness. Shortsighted people will tell us that the poor are spoiled by education. If education be considered as the exclusive work of a drawling preacher and an unqualified master, the remark holds good. But there is an universal responsibility that rests upon the shoulders of every

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single cultivated man and woman, to shed abroad intelligence, to go out in person to confront ignorance, to take dirty human clay in the hand and mould it into forms of comeliness and grace. The moment we learn a thing worth knowing we are bound to make it known to others. So far from losing by the transmission, we gain infinitely by every gift. The idleness, the ignorance, the sottishness, the superstition of our neighbours is our own great disgrace, our own great loss. It is a loss so serious and terrible that we should endeavour by our own efforts to make it good. We should tremble to confide the replacement to other hands.

In every village should be well-appointed infant schools to clear the high-road of imperilled children, and train them in habits of cleanliness, neatness, and order; in every town should be large and lofty rooms, superintended by well-bred, highly-cultivated women, supplied with every means that could amuse and improve our little brothers and sisters. Our preparatory schools should be superintended by gentlemen holding equal rank with the national clergy; the rate of fees should be fixed so low as to admit of the schools being attended by all classes in

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common; the incomes of teachers, where the totality of fees were low, should be supplemented from the general or local purse, out of which also the poorest pupils should, for a while at least, be supplied with the means of procuring for school attendance the requisite school manuals, and befitting, simple raiment. But, until these latter were old enough to work for their own partial support, they should be forced to come in. Our teaching of boys should be national, catholic. The instruction provided by the body public should be so generous and interesting as to defy the competition of unenlightened grammar-hucksterers. So far from seeking to stereotype our present system of petty ignoble exclusiveness, we should throw ourselves with enthusiasm into a holy war for the purpose of breaking down barriers, of throwing light into dark dwellings, of shedding refinement over meanness and vulgarity.

Gentle reader of independent means, quiet life, inoffensive ways, you never pass in the streets a dirty, sickly, untaught lad; an idle, good-for-nothing, dissipated man; an unwomanly, unselfrespecting woman; but some little of the blame of what you see rests with

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yourself. Pause in your walk, and regard attentively these saddening objects. There is good in that lad; there is a chance for that man; there is hope for that woman. You are removed from them all by but a few insignificant grades of social rank; if their experiences, chances, and temptations were weighed against your own in an unerring balance, the result might not be flattering to your vanity; at all events they are kith and kin to you; they are bound to you by cords of responsibility that are clearly visible to the eye of reason, and to be broken only to the cost and detriment of the breaker.

Do not, I beseech you, reader, think that you fulfil your duty in endeavouring to impress upon their untutored minds abstract and difficult doctrines which you have been comfortably brought up to believe, and which neither you nor any man now living will ever even dimly comprehend. Take this practical world in a practical way. Become poor with the poor; ignorant with the ignorant. Begin at the beginning. Do not despise those honest, useful, unpretending handmaidens—Reading, Writing, Arithmetic. It would, I grant you, be in keep-

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ing with sentiment and flattering to complacent self-love, to expound a chapter and read an exhilaratingly miserable sermon upon universal depravity. Use, for a while at least, means more prosaic, but likely to be more effectual. Do not be ashamed to admit the poorly-clad into the schoolrooms of your children, into your parks, your fashionable walks. Talk with men and women of a so-called lower degree without reserve, without a forcing of condescension, in a free, open-air, self-forgetful, and wholesome way. You will be a friend to good manners by discountenancing bobbing courtesys in womenfolk, and jerky clutchings at male forelocks. Give every aid in your power to throw innocent pleasure in the way of the poor, without obtruding on their privacy, or tampering with their sense of self-respect. If there be people dependent on you for support, aid cordially such as are ambitious of independence, and stimulate the inactive to a like wholesome ambition; and be not disappointed if the successful should occasionally be ungrateful: there may be more of selfishness in the grateful sycophant who clings to you, than in the man whom success has unduly, but not altogether unreasonably, elated. Above

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all, look upon the children of the poorest as the brothers and sisters of your own boys and girls, of your little brothers and your little sisters. Do not, for Heaven's sake, speak of them as belonging to 'the lower orders,' as your 'inferiors,' as of 'the humble classes;' but consider them as of one nationality, one brotherhood, one flesh and blood with yourself and with your own, and train them up mentally as though their little brains were made upon the same mould as that of the being you love most in the world.

Believe me, gentle reader, it will be a comfort to you every evening, before you sink asleep, to think that you have done some little work to straighten depravity, to enlighten ignorance, to tame brutality, to strengthen weakness. Doubtless the task of uplifting the lazy, of stimulating the unenergetic, of awakening the unconscious, of convincing the incredulous, is hard, very hard. The world seems to stand still at times; at times it seems to retrograde. *Eppure si muove, si muove.* But, supposing even that it were at a stand-still, you would push it on a little, if, in dealing with ignorance, you would employ, to your life's end, the trio of lowly handmaidens above-mentioned, under the guidance of the

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higher trio of Patience, Discretion, and Energy, and in the spirit of a trio higher and nobler still—Faith, Hope, and Charity. It will be an unspeakable comfort to you and me, when the summons comes to us that comes to all, if, with our friends afore-mentioned of the Ragged Schools, we can rest assured that in the heyday of health and prosperity we have done our very utmost—albeit that utmost may have been a very little—in a plain, sober, practical, work-a-day, unpretending, undogmatizing way, to make the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

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VI.

WHAT IS A SCHOOLMASTER?

READER, if you were to enter a thronged schoolyard, and see three hundred little fellows busily and merrily engaged at a variety of exhilarating games, and were informed that the urchins were embryo-sailors or embryo-soldiers, a gleam of romantic sentiment would lighten up your imagination; you would throw yourself into a distant futurity, —into one, perhaps, on the yonder side of your own grave,—and you would picture to yourself frozen seas explored, winds and waves subdued, or gaily-dressed battalions moving measuredly to fife and drum music, and you would hear in imagination the cries of triumph on some smoky field of battle.

Had you been told that every one of the romping children before you was destined to

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be an undertaker, your sense of the ridiculous would first have been aroused, and then you would half seriously have wondered if some half dozen of these youngsters might not live to wear funny hat-bands and drink copiously of porter at and after your own funeral.

But, had you been assured that the institution was a hatching nest of future schoolmasters, your sentimentality would have been hit between wind and water; you would have been thrown into a dull and opaque mood of melancholy reflection.

Of the thirty years that have elapsed since I left my mother's roof, fifteen have been spent at school and college in the capacity of learner, and fifteen at school and college in the capacity of teacher. My kindest friends in early life, and my most cherished companions in manhood, have belonged to my own present profession. Were I a painter, and could portray that representation of an ideal-teacher which experience has stereotyped upon my brain, I should draw a black-gowned figure seated at a desk, his chin resting on one hand, and in his countenance a mingled look of kindness, weariness, resignation, and conscious irrelevancy.

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The instances are rare and exceptional where youths apprenticed to the sea take to soldiering in manhood; where medical students turn to the law; where young lawyers diverge to commercial pursuits; where engineers blossom into popular preachers. The majority of existing schoolmasters in the leading schools of England and Scotland had no definite forecasting of their future calling at their first entry into academic life. Until their degrees were taken, the Bar and the Church would flit alternately before their eyes; but at length a day would come when they were brought suddenly face to face with a world of stern realities; a world peopled with butchers and bakers and grocers; a world giving nothing for nothing. A little capital and a little influence might carry them over the interval of slack-tide between student-life and professional self-supporting days; but the capital and influence, and oftentimes the courage, the patience, the self-denial, and self-reliance are lacking. The novices look wistfully into the face of Circumstance; feel in their pockets for bits of coin to pay their way withal; and draw out reluctantly their testimonial-medallions of classical and

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mathematical attainment. And thus it is that many a would-be parson and would-be pleader drifts into the weary, half-resigned, half-repining schoolmaster.

What is the reason, then, that our profession is one so seldom sought out at all; so very seldom sought out with eagerness; so often one into which, as into a pit, Poverty or Disappointment is pushed by an adverse Fortune, or stumbles out of fear and irresolution? How is it that, in the so-called middle-class of life, we should congratulate a youth on being admitted into a thriving mercantile firm; on passing his preliminary examination for a naval cadetship or an army commission; on being called to the Bar; on his appointment to a dispensary, or to an ecclesiastical cure? The answer is a plain and simple one: it is because, in any of these few cases, we should feel that the object of our congratulations was now at the outset of a career in the course of which, with health and strength vouchsafed, he would, humanly speaking, be sure of achieving a competency by the possession of moderate abilities, and the moderate display of perseverance, integrity, and discretion; and of attaining to wealth and social distinction, if

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upon moderate abilities he could bring to bear, in addition to homely virtues and qualities, the motive power of a vigorous and energetic nature. If, again, we were bidding farewell to a youthful relative, as he quitted a country home to seek his fortune in some capital or academic city in the walks of pure science or pure literature, we should, indeed, view the adventure as a hopeless one, if our youth were gifted only with moderate abilities; but, if his call to science or to letters were to our minds a genuine and indubitable one, we should cheerily wish him God-speed upon his journey, upon the grounds that, although the blanks in his chosen career were numerous, there would assuredly be in it much of enjoyment; that the prizes, if they turned up at all, would be striking and valuable; and that the field for work and utility would be inexhaustive and illimitable. But alas! if the object of our solicitude, after a prolonged and successful course at school and college, had just succeeded, after an arduous competition, in procuring a nomination as under-master in an ordinary grammar-school, the generality of us would feel it difficult to throw much of warmth or enthusiasm into our congratulations. We should feel that a young

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fellow of good abilities and tried industry were entering the scholastic den, at the opening of which most of the footprints were seen to point one inward way; that he was upon the outset of a career which was not a career; that he was walking, half unconsciously, into a professional *cul-de-sac.*

Our forebodings would be very materially lessened if he were re-entering, as teacher, some old and wealthy institution in which he had been educated in his youth: he would be now, in fact, constituted a member of a powerful and quasi-commercial corporation; and nothing but persistent misconduct could divert him from the path to comfort or to affluence. Our feelings would be those of absolute hopefulness if, on entering the scholastic profession, our friend or relative should, in defiance of logic, legally qualify himself for a higher but altogether independent calling, to be followed hereafter, if it should at any casual date offer higher emoluments or a rise in social position.

If, then, our statements be correct, that of some nine careers open to educated youth there is one that holds out fewer inducements by far than any of the rest, it would be most unreason-

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able in us to conclude, without diligent investigation into all the circumstances of the case, that the low estimate of this one profession were altogether undeserved.

A sentimental person will speak feelingly of the drudgery of a schoolmaster's life, and touchingly of the trials of governesses, of the privations of poor and prolific curates. It is thus that self-complacency, by the discharge of empty words, imagines to relieve itself of a weighty responsibility. An English Protestant mother will assert that it is a matter of vital importance under whose pulpit ministrations her children should be called once a week to sit; and yet we are all well aware, that of the entrants into holy orders the vast majority are utterly ignorant of Hebrew, the primitive language of the older Scriptures, and the majority very poorly qualified in the two classical languages in which the earliest Christian records and doctrinal works are written. Such a mother will be naturally anxious about the instruction of her girls; and yet, in selecting a governess, she will be probably swayed by the partially or totally irrelevant considerations that this or that candidate has a clear touch on the piano; that her hands

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are small and white; or that her father was a clergyman, and died recently, leaving a family wholly unprovided for. An ordinary English father will assure you, with a great command of feature, that the education of his sons is to him a matter of extreme anxiety; that day after day the importance of sound instruction is being brought more and more home to his appreciation; that he has in his later years bitterly repented or regretted the lack of assiduity or of advantages in his own youth. By and by he will accompany one of his boys to a neighbouring grammar-school, and will enter his boy under one of the under-masters, and, on returning home, will comfort his wife and himself by the intelligence that the lad's new master is a gentlemanly-looking man, a clergyman, distantly related to one of their own county families, that he was a junior optimè at Cambridge—*ignotum pro magnifico* to the wife at least,—that he was somewhere in the first-class in classical honours, and gained a gold medal for a Greek ode in sapphics upon 'The taking of Seringapatam.'

With all our serious talk, then, of the importance of efficiency in two callings,—and the importance of efficiency in either is of incalculable

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value to the community,—we all, as a rule, follow blindly in a groove of routine, like sheep after a bell-wether of fashion. But how is it in secular and personal matters of avowedly minor importance—infinitely minor importance? No sane man would consent to have a back-tooth extracted by an unqualified tooth-extractor; no affectionate and sensible parent would entrust a boy with the measles or a consumptive daughter to the care of a medical amateur, although the latter were a close relation of his own, or the inheritor of a lordly estate; no man but a divinely sublime toady would put out to sea in dangerously rough weather with the son of a duke at the helm, if the latter were practically inexperienced in boating and yachting; no man would entrust a legal case of the very slightest importance to his nephew, if the latter, although long ago called to the bar, were known to be utterly unacquainted with the very technicalities of his profession. Why is it, then, that we are so trustful, so unquestioning, in the case of curates and schoolmasters? Is it that, in the serious matters of spiritual and intellectual development, we are, for the most part, unbelievers and hypocrites? Do we, notwithstanding all our protestations,

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consider the duties of the ecclesiastic and the teacher to be easy, trivial, unimportant, perfunctory?

I will confine my remarks entirely to the schoolmaster. So far as my own experience goes, I would unhesitatingly assert that the great majority of parents are little interested in the mental development of their boys, provided only that they are kept out of their own—and harm's—way; that their health is attended to; that the school-fees for extras are not exorbitant; that their holidays are not too frequent and too long; and, above all, that they mix with children of at least their own rank in our social scale. I grant it, that our solicitude increases in intensity as our boys advance towards youth. The ill-regulated temper that was amusing in years past is becoming ungovernable; the ignorance, that *in petto* was an indirect flattery to our own comparative knowledge, is now a matter of alarm. Our responsibilities are beginning to stare us in the face. We are approaching the autumn of our children's school-days: we sowed no seed or poor seed in the spring-time; and we are disappointed now at the miserable promise of the harvest.

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So long as childhood and boyhood are little esteemed, so long the schoolmaster must be content to hold a Pariah rank among professional men. That he does hold such a rank is a lamentable but an incontestable fact. The fault lies partly with himself, and partly with the outer society. The remedy does not lie in his own hands altogether; but it does lie in his own hands to a very great extent. He must improve his wares; must expose better articles for sale; must throw away all wooden nutmegs. For a while his old customers will miss these latter articles; but in a very little while they will awaken to a sense of the old delusion, and the commercial rule will work its invariable way: the vendor of good and necessary produce will find a lucrative market; the dispenser of good and indispensable things will be himself held good and indispensable.

For the sake of convenience we shall confine our remarks for the present to the case of our grammar-schools. Any suggestions or remarks made regarding them may be easily modified to suit the case of proprietary or private or governmental institutions. We have in these grammar-schools alone a numerous body of academically

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trained men, out of which all who have foregone the obvious advantages of holy orders belong to no definite and recognised calling. No peculiar line of ultimate training has led up to their present position; there is no path to honour marked out for the eminently able and ambitious. Indeed, as a general rule, the duties of a subordinate teacher are so limited and monotonous, that it is very hard to display eminent ability in their working. In the great majority of schools a master has the instruction of one particular class, which, after a year's attendance, passes to a colleague's exclusive care; and so on, until a remnant of it closes its school-time under the charge of the head-master. In other words, the division of labour is supposed to be as efficacious for the mental training of lads as it is for the manufacture of pins. The system acts as deadeningly on the pupil as on the teacher. The latter may begin his work in early manhood, and for a while health and strength and courage will sustain him in his mill-horse avocations. But no human fortitude could possibly hold out unblenchingly against ten consecutive years of Phædrus and Cornelius Nepos; nay, against some few pages only, reiterated and reiterated, of these uninterest-

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ing writers. The pupils are only plagued with these latter for a passing season; but their teacher will return to the dull fare next year, and the next year, and the year after that, and yearly, perhaps, until the end. Often and often has a veteran, at the close of a weary and unchequered existence, cursed the far away and irrevocable days wasted on academic learning, and regretted the youthful ambition that led him from more practical, cheerful, and hopeful careers. I think if a distinguished foreigner were taken into the study of such a veteran in some of our leading grammar-schools, and were shown the few Latin and fewer Greek pages over which his intelligence had been crawling for three-quarters of a life-time, he would be under the idea that the elderly gentleman before him was expiating some great political crime in a new and ingenious improvement on Siberia.

The benumbing mill-horse system is very general, is almost universal, in England. At the leading public schools in Edinburgh—at all events it was so for the twelve years during which I had the honour to belong to one of them—a much healthier system is in vogue. In the junior school a boy enters under one of four

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classical masters, under whose care he remains for four years; even then, if he should remain for the three remaining years which complete the curriculum, his classical instruction will be shared with the head-master by his old friend. This latter, by being thus allowed to see the fruits of his labour, is encouraged to take a something like paternal interest in his charges; and, from the amount of time at his disposal, he is compelled to diverge from time to time from the beaten track of dry studies to healthful, wholesome, and refreshing discussion. Such a method of teaching is, in essentials, professorial; it needs only the substitution of other studies for classics in the earlier years, and the dispensing altogether with classics in particular cases, to render the system almost perfect.

The two representative nations of the old hemisphere have been hitherto France and England. French civilisation is centripetal; that of England, centrifugal. Our neighbours demand systematization in all things; we insist upon individuality and spontaneity. The irrepressive tendency of the English character may be witnessed in a diversity of ways. We are, politically, a nondescript people; we are warmly loyal to the

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sovereign, and proud of our old aristocratic names, and yet we preach democracy in the columns of our newspapers; we assert the equality of all men, and have hitherto submitted, with a little of harmless grumbling, to be governed by a small posse of oligarchs; we abhor interference in matters spiritual, and support without discontent an aristocratic church; we declare the public welfare to override all considerations, and our iron high-roads are given over to selfish and suicidal adventure; we have a veneration for law and order, and the administration of law, in its inferior department, is the prerogative of property; we are continually exciting foreign enmity by our patronage of foreign discontent, and are stern in our means for repressing discontent within our own limits; we believe ourselves honestly to be pure and chaste lovers of the goddess Fair-play, and our great national journal is a by-word throughout the world and amongst ourselves as the symbol of meanness, falsehood, ability, and un-principle—as a moral weathercock, a political strumpet. Our very language and literature is replete with anomalies: we have no rules for spelling or pronunciation; we are the greatest borrowers of words, and still our native tongue

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asserts its supremacy; we are a people of low theatrical tastes, and our own great dramatist holds his own against antiquity and the moderns; we are said to be unmusical, and the 'Messiah,' the greatest of all musical achievements, was virtually a native production; we can hardly be called a mathematical people, and we claim as our own the two Coryphæi of modern science; it was one of our anti-æsthetic Puritans that usurped the third place in the æsthetic hierarchy of European poets; much of our municipal freedom was due to our kings; much of our personal freedom to our nobles. We have throughout our history been practical disbelievers in the axiom that tells us that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. But, like trees that have been planted in unfavourable spots, we twist and turn and rise into sunlight. It is a slow and painful process with us; but we turn and twist and rise. Our civilisation moves like the glacier, majestically, noiselessly, and very slowly; but still it moves,—*eppure si muove.*

This love of singularity, anomaly, and independence in our countrymen is oftentimes a barrier against licence or rash empiricism. It is as often an unwholesome and unreasonable

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check upon improvement. We are too prone to brand displacement as overthrow, modification as revolution. Our Anglo-Saxon love for municipal and local institutions impresses us with an especial dread—and in nearly all cases a wholesome dread—of centralization. State control, directly used, is, we own, calculated to exercise a deadening influence upon other than primary educational institutions, but academic co-operation would dignify a school and utilize an university. At present, we see the members of what should be a definite profession acting as independent units in little spheres; their utility thereby lessened, their social position deteriorated. We, the would-be reformers, are seeking to raise order out of confusion; dignity out of disparagement; corporate cohesive action out of individually wasted energy. We are met by apathy from the outer public, and too often by hostility from our brethren.

There is a society now in process of formation, the primary object of which is to gain for the schoolmaster a social position that shall be definite, special, and legally fixed, and intelligibly recognised; in other words, to gain for the scholastic profession advantages that are enjoyed,

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with as much of advantage to the public as to themselves, by the apothecary, the surgeon, and the physician. Were the members of 'The Scholastic Registration Association' actuated only by the natural and pardonable desire of bettering their own social position, their claims, if fraught with no detriment to alien interests, would be deserving of sympathy without and within the borders of their profession. But upon public grounds their claims demand favourable attention, when the first result to be brought about by their projected limitations and restrictions would be an elevated and broadened standard of acquirements as required in future candidates for scholastic initiation or preferment. And observe, this modest but public-spirited society asks for no monopoly; calls only upon academical societies to unite and issue a brand of didactic qualifications, without any intention of quarrelling with such as shall choose to purchase the unregistered article. Indeed, the wonder is not that such modest claims are now put forward, but that these were not put forward and allowed at the period of the Reformation. Our social condition is, I own, almost as artificial as that of China; we have separate

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platforms of varying heights for varied grades; for inherited rank, for inherited wealth, for the ecclesiastic, for the soldier, the sailor, the advocate, the physician, the surgeon, the solicitor. It is not with the view of introducing superfluous artificiality into a, perhaps, too complex organism that we push the claims of the schoolmaster. It is rather with the view of introducing simplification, of removing an anomaly, of putting hundreds of educated men in the place of respect and honour that is justly due to their attainments. Were our professional brethren to make an united effort in the cause, we should carry our object with ease and rapidity. As it is, the lay-workers amongst us are but poorly seconded by the most powerful, wealthy, and influential among our own order, who, as ecclesiastics, enjoy higher social privileges than, perhaps, the scholastic world could under any circumstances confer on them.

Hereafter, in speaking of a schoolmaster we shall be speaking of a non-clerical one; and we here also remark that, while we are cordial well-wishers of the society above mentioned, we would not pledge ourselves to its subsidiary objects, nor be indisposed to hear suggestions of

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improvement, or, if sound reason were shown, of even radical change.

It is said—I believe with truth—that there are no schools patronized by any grade, however wealthy, in the kingdom, to compare, in regard to the relative value of instruction given, with our Government National Schools. The cause must be, to a very great extent, attributed to the supervision of enlightened, unprejudiced, utilitarian, and—what is very important—independent, well-paid inspectors. The condition of our grammar-schools could not fail to be improved by a system of similar, not identical—academic, not governmental—supervision. Direct legislation in the matter would now be premature. Voluntary co-operation could alone avail; and that might eventually extend so widely as to render direct legislative interference unnecessary. It is needless for a while to expect submission to external authority, however enlightened, on the part of our great public schools. Their wealth and prestige, by rendering them almost independent of casualties, render them, to a very great extent, invulnerable to stricture, deaf to counsel, resolute against change. But, if some six or eight of our lesser grammar-schools would

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combine, and submit to regular and identical supervision, and this supervision were, at frequent intervals, exercised by inspectors nominated *by the nearest university* from amongst its most accomplished graduates; if special preparation for such inspection were precluded by uncertainty of date, and classes were caught here and there in, as it were, their ordinary work-a-day clothes; and if the results of inspection were at the close of each annual session made public; our schools would be made aware of their several deficiencies; the public would be re-assured as to their actual merits, where existent, and, under any circumstances, of their honesty of purpose and willingness to improve; and every increase of confidence on the part of the public in the working of our schools would logically lead to an increased estimate of the value of her schoolmasters.

It may be urged against my proposal, that we have already a system at work of periodical examinations, oral and written. I reply, that in most cases the examinations are illusory, and that in many cases, where good work is done, it is done at a needless expense of time. In no single instance is the examination of a public

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school, as now conducted, thoroughly satisfactory; as it is never the master, but always the pupil, that is subjected to scrutiny. In other words, an examiner is called upon to state whether this or that class has worked satisfactorily in a given subject; but he is never called on to state whether the pupil has had too much of one kind and too little of another kind of mental food. Indeed, in most instances, he is little disposed to pass opinions thus freely, and still less qualified to enforce them with authority; as he is, in most instances, a private friend of the head-master who invites him; or a former pupil at the school he is called on to inspect; or is a master in some other school carried on upon identical principles, the merits and defects of which, from habit and association, he is unable to weigh with impartiality and accuracy. Indeed, such commonly recurring specimens of examinership would appear to me analogous to cases where a purchaser, in dealing with a wine-merchant, should choose a cousin of the latter as a judge of his goods, or should call in to taste this or that wine a friend whom he knew to have recently drunk too freely of the wine in question. The times of examination, also, are

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usually fixed a week or two before vacation-time, and the specified work has usually been revised *ad nauseam* a week or two before the examination begins. All this time is almost invariably wasted. The energies have been strung up to full tension for competition work; and ordinary work, as lacking the stimulus of prize-winning, is stale, flat, and supposedly unprofitable. If stimulants are perilous in manhood, they are doubly so to boys. Splendidly bound books are used, with a somewhat questionable expedience, to draw onwards the able and ambitious; and, with an inexpediency altogether unquestionable, goads of a more stimulating kind are employed to push on the idle and the dull. I am disposed to think that fixed examination-times, prize-subjects, medals, and canes all more or less partake of the unhealthy nature of stimulants, and that they would become gradually less and less necessary as the subject-matter of school studies should increase in interest, vitality, *and relativity to surrounding actualities*. I am quite aware that to dispense with prizes and canes would entail a great increase of trouble upon the teacher; but, if their absence were to stimulate him to double his

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exertions and widen his reading, he, together with his pupils, would be the gainer in the end.

Furthermore, I would recommend that the suggested academic inspection should never be singular, but that every quasi-periodic examination—for the dates would only vary within limits—should be conducted by two inspectors acting in concert; and that one of these should be eminent in scholarship, and the other in mathematical and natural science. I think, however, it would be highly advisable that one report should be agreed to and signed by them in common. It seems to me better that two eminent men should confine themselves to opinions wherein they can agree, than that they should distract the minds of others by the elaboration of subtle and varying disquisitions.

Under present circumstances, nothing can be simpler than the plan of action to be followed by a young and inexperienced teacher in scholarship or mathematical science. He has the traditions of his own school-days for guidance. He equips himself in a magisterial gown; he lays a cane upon his desk; a little class is summoned; some six or eight lines of (occasionally) worthless Latin, or a problem in geometry, is

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the work of the hour. The Latin is anatomized according to ancestral formulæ; the geometrical problem is by the better pupils solved by a subjective, mental, difficult process; by the inferior pupils committed to memory; by the *enfants perdus* is bungled,—and the unfortunates are treated according to a time-honoured prescription.

Our proposed inspectors would probably cause a revolution in this world of scholastic routine. They would wish to see a teacher not seated behind a desk, but on a chair upon the school-floor, on a level with and confronted by his little fellows, whose work should be prepared, thought out, and wrought out in their presence. They would expect to see pupil and teacher wax naturally warm over their mutual work; they would prefer to see energetic irregularity at times rather than a stereotyped and monotonous preciseness; they would be filled with belief in the powers of a master, when his enthusiasm kindled enthusiasm in themselves.

In some such way as that here described the College of Preceptors acts upon a great number of private schools in England, and the London University upon many colleges in various parts

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of the United Kingdom. The benefit to the public would be incalculable if the Grammar-schools of England, the Foundation, Diocesan, Model, and National Schools of Ireland, and the High Schools and Academies of Scotland, were affiliated in groups to the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Dublin, and the Colleges or quasi-Universities of Belfast, Cork, and Galway. But the public welfare is not at present my object in view, although its advancement would be ensured by even the partial achievement of my direct object, which is simply to obtain fixity and dignity of social position to the schoolmaster as schoolmaster.

A colonel in a regiment must have passed through all the grades, from that of ensign or cornet and upwards, and will be little esteemed in his profession unless he be thoroughly conversant with the duties of private, corporal, serjeant, and each separate grade of commissioned officers; with all the minutiæ of clothing and commissariat for home or field service. A first-class captain of a man-of-war has, in his probation time, put his hand to every duty of a sailor; from stem to stern,

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from keel to pennant, the use of every article of mechanism is as familiar to him as that of his watch-key. The judge upon the bench was briefless once; maybe for years he did gratis work in an attorney's office; he had his years of anxious waiting, followed by years of labour as junior and senior counsel, before he reached the haven of comparative rest. To all these favoured professions there are brilliant prizes, in money and in distinction, attached; and there are no cases wherein the highest prizes are assigned to a novice, if we except only —for the army and navy—the rare and unimportant ones of royal princes. In the scholastic world there are only two sets of prizes,—the head-masterships of schools, and the professorial chairs at the universities. The instances have of late years been common where youths of very brilliant academic distinctions have been called, in earliest manhood and wholly inexperienced in practical teaching or economic arrangements, to the charge of large and wealthy institutions. For a candidate to any Chair, it is actually a strong point against him that he should have been a schoolmaster; it is not a point very much in his favour that he

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should have been a successful one. It is said—and, under present circumstances, it is often said with truth—that the dull routine of school duties is no preparation for the more generous and expansive lectures of the professor. I am quite aware that it is not; but I am not aware of any distinction between the nature of boys and that of youths such as to justify us in withholding from the former in our teaching hours the liveliness, the animation, the interchange of question and answer that we vouchsafe to the latter; I cannot believe that the youth at college is to the boy at school as the head to the tail end of a severed worm; I cannot believe that, with all the complexity of a boy's organism, Nature can have ordained that his physical nutriment should be palatable, but his mental food indigestible and nauseous. Before the schoolmaster can expect to rise in social estimation, he must throw away scholastic superstitions; he need not love Latin and Greek and subjective mathematics any the less, but he must love all the more drawing, music, natural history, natural science; he must acknowledge that the same Power which has set the sea the bounds it cannot pass has limited but varied

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the faculties of childhood and boyhood; he must solemnly and repentantly abjure his once nearly undivided fealty to a Latin-and-Greek Procrustes, and resolve henceforward to regulate his manipulation of a pupil by four co-ordinate considerations: the pupil's special age; his special aptitudes; his physical strength; and, above all, *by the condition and tendencies of external cotemporaneous society.*

Nor is self-improvement alone necessary; he must abandon his present condition of isolation, and for self-protection and self-assertion combine with his brethren; he must let the daylight into his class-room, that his defects may be descried and corrected, and his excellences made known with authority to the outer world; and, when he shall have submitted to all this, he may fairly claim the privileges of an useful and dignified profession; he may fairly consider himself as directly qualified to stand as candidate for every scholastic and academic prize and distinction; *he may fairly and effectually assert his right to be represented by a colleague in such councils as direct the institution in which he serves,* the which councils have hitherto been open only to head-masters in his own calling, to

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the gentry, to the nobility, or to members of alien professions.

But, until my brother schoolmaster can thus far widen his sympathies and modify his work, he must be content to remain an object of respect largely mingled with contemptuous pity; a professional Gibeonite, he must draw water and hew wood for professions more favoured; he must stand a stationary anachronism in an age of progress, like a moss-coloured mile-stone upon an old, disused, and grass-grown highway.

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VII.

YOUTH AND COLLEGE.

YOU will bear in mind, reader, that the desultory sketches given of my school and college days refer to years within the dates of 1836 and 1854. Within the last thirteen years more attention has been bestowed on the subject of education than had been bestowed for perhaps two previous centuries. In my own St. Edward's the curriculum of instruction has been somewhat improved, and the social discipline somewhat softened; and it would have been difficult to deteriorate either. Into some others of our old historic schools —walled round, albeit, with an adamantine conservatism,— innovating under-masters have introduced the wedge-point of contemporaneous thought. The more recently founded schools, such as those of Edinburgh, Cheltenham, and Marl-

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borough, combine many of the social advantages of the older institutions with not a few of the advantages—the systematic study of natural science excepted,—called for by the disciples of innovation. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge are year by year expanding from sectarian into national communities, from a two-fold congeries of classico-mathematical Boarding Schools into broad, generous, and catholic Universities. With regard to Cambridge alone, two commissions and an Act of Parliament have been brought to bear upon the question of improvement; the constitution of the University, and, to some extent, that of the colleges—alas for the burrows of comfortable St. Ignavia!—have been remodelled. The curriculum of studies has been enlarged, especially in the direction of law, moral philosophy, medicine, surgery, and natural science. Large museums and lecture-rooms have been built and fitted up. The terms and times for degrees have all undergone essential alterations. The examinations for ordinary degrees are altogether different from the ordeals passed through by a graduate of ten years' standing. There are several new class-lists for honours; and in the course of a very few months

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the old classical and mathematical examinations are likely to undergo radical change. The professoriate has been extended; the last additions being the chair of Sanscrit and Comparative Philology; and, ere long, will probably be added chairs of Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and International Law. It is as well, however, to add that the University is honourably moving in advance of the scholastic world. She is providing professorial instruction for which no great public school as yet adequately prepares; and her chief rewards are still the prizes of successful study in the two branches of pure abstract mathematical science and of the Latin and Greek languages and literatures.

It is difficult to ascertain the condition of the smaller colleges; but their tenure of fellowships has been improved, and relieved of many of the old restrictions. The great college of Trinity provides classical lectures so frequent and so good in quality as to enable her students to dispense with the ancient burdensome expenses entailed by private tuition; English literature is recognised in her examination-hall; her scholarships *are thrown generously open to all and sundry of the sister University of Oxford;*

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and the same will probably be done, ere long, with her fellowships. Finally, there are three bills before Parliament affecting the universities, all of which are fraught with important results, and all of which, in some form or other, will eventually pass into law. In matters political, reform is thought to rise like smoke upwards; in matters educational, we see the rule reversed, and our academical Houses of Lords are calling their scholastic Commons to mend their ways and improve their condition.

Before one step had been taken in the way of reform for Oxford and Cambridge, the London University and the Queen's University in Ireland had been called into existence, and, notwithstanding the splendid list of improvements above enumerated, the curricula and constitutions of the new universities still hold the superiority in breadth and catholicity. Indeed, there can be little doubt that their constitutions suggested many of the recent changes in the old corporations, and that their successful working has all along encouraged and assisted Oxonian and Cantabrigian reformers in their great and arduous task. Their influence for good, combined with the still more powerful influence of the genius

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of progress now abroad, is at work in Ireland as well as in England, and is being felt by the wealthy conservative College of Dublin, which within the last fifteen years has been slowly but steadily advancing, and will ere long, it is said, move so rapidly in the path of remodelment as to render superfluous the suggestions of reformers and the interference of Parliament. These circumstances may be comforting to the world in general; but they are very distressing to poor honest writers on academic obstruction, who have now to run hastily and indecorously to catch hold by the tail of some disappearing abuse; who have to write while there is yet a little twilight, for fear the noonday come wherein they, poor honest moles, must cease to work from the lack of work to do.

From the time of Charlemagne to the epoch of the Tudors western Europe was politically subdivided; but in matters of religion, art, scholarship, and philosophy, was one great republic. The religious movement of the seventeenth century shattered this grand and venerable fabric. Its reconstruction may come with time; but, to render it possible, the element of metaphysical—not practical—religion must be eliminated from

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the influences employed. However, before indulging our imaginations with the prospect of European, and eventually *more than European*, academic brotherhood, it would be as well to inquire into the chances of establishing a mutually benefiting intercourse between the several universities of our own nation.

As the Queen's University in Ireland is a conglomerate of three separate colleges, which are severally in all essentials universities, we may state that the United Kingdom contains the twelve universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Galway. A religious element only enters into four of the twelve: into Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin, and Durham; and the valuable prizes are in the gift of the three first among these four. The great work of nationalizing our universities might be commenced by throwing open in the three wealthiest universities all professorships and fellowships for competition to graduates of the said three. The scheme would be found so beneficial in its results, that its action would be gradually extended, until a youth would select his own college upon the consideration of

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neighbourhood, expense, or comparative value of tuition, and would search his rewards where rewards were most numerous and valuable. I would go so far as to assert that, in due time, *it would be found desirable to refuse a degree for continuous attendance at any one university or at separate universities in one and the same of the three portions of the United Kingdom.* English, Irish, and Scottish youths would all alike be benefited by passing severally at least one academic year out of England, Ireland, and Scotland. The social and political advantages of such a scheme of international fusion would far outweigh such as were directly educational ; and these latter alone would be great beyond calculation. Chairs, that here and there had long been valuable or valueless sinecures, would be called by distant importunate visitants into action ; there would no longer be paralysis here and quasi-putrefaction there ; but a healthful blood would be forced through all the academic arteries, to return through scholastic veins to the nation's heart. I will now overstep considerations of nationality, of even European academic fraternity. I will maintain that the ocean, which is the highway for the material commerce of two

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hemispheres, should not be held as a non-conductor to the immaterial sympathies of learning and inquiry. I am sure that a coming generation will see the colleges of the new and old world forming members of one consolidated university. Such an university! God speed its inauguration!

Under such happy circumstances as above foreshadowed, every academic distinction would partake of a national, an European, or a cosmopolitan character. Until recently a fellowship was known to be achieved with difficulty at such colleges as Trinity and St. John's, Cambridge; at Balliol and Oriel, Oxford; at Trinity, Dublin; because at these and a few more competition was open to large numbers, or the value of the prizes intensified competition; but at the great majority of the English colleges the attainment of a fellowship might occasionally be a sign of talent, but was often a sign of stolid, ignoble, bull-dog clinging to one department of study, and very often a sign of sheer luck. In my own times, at one palatial college in Cambridge, and at more colleges than one in Oxford, fellowships were virtually conferred on youths even years before they left school. *I am speaking from actual knowledge.* A certain examination would be

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passed at about the age of fifteen or sixteen; if a youthful competitor were successful against *some two or three* antagonists, he would wait on at school until a vacancy at college occurred; he would now require only patience, time, and vegetable growth to qualify him for fellowship, tutorship, and college living; he would throw aside all serious study for life; would read a few classical poets for amusement; would lay in a stock of Horatian quotations; would occupy the greater part of his hours in school, as hereafter his college evenings, with whist, and his leisure hours out of school with sport. The life-long rewards at the great Cambridge College were bestowed on the leading pupils of the greatest wealthiest school in all the world; and the chief attainment of these lucky lads was rapidity and fluency in the composition of Latin verse. At Cambridge they were not required to compete in any way for out-college distinctions; they had before them a world without a limiting horizon; they had done life's work; they might turn to their rest on earth, by way of preparation for a sounder, deeper, and, if possible, more unprofitable repose underground. It is true that some ambitious youths would prevent their ver-

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sification from waxing rusty, and would occupy lazy and unprofitable months in writing hexameters, alcaics, and sapphics for the annual medals, and would thus be adding periodically to that Babel-pyramid of rubbish with the building of which dilettante scholarship has been amusing herself for nearly two thousand years; at Athens, under the early Cæsars; at Oxford, under Anne and William; at Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin to this very day.

The great portion of the old academic endowments was bestowed by the intelligence and piety of Catholics, *with the liberal object of promoting the study of contemporary knowledge.* The propriety of diverting bequests of a public nature, to accord with the motives rather than the express words of the testator, has been acknowledged again and again; and the only limit of diversion would appear to be the considerations of obvious honesty of motive and obvious public utility. There cannot be a doubt that it would be better for the nation at large, *as certainly it would be more in keeping with the virtual wishes of the founders,* that academic prizes, carrying with them social prestige and almost pecuniary independence, should be open

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to national competition, and very widely in the departments of science characteristic of the age, rather than to the competition of a majority or minority, and exclusively in the departments of elegant but antiquated accomplishment, or of such scientific subtleties as whet the intellect without direct and practical tendency.

These views will doubtless appear revolutionary to many excellent and able men. The truth is, the whole train of our social civilisation is antipathetic to catholicity; is insular, reserved, hedged-round, elbows-off, home-keeping. We are afraid of draughts and cold-taking in everything and every place. To worship God in a cathedral would seem to many of us as uncomfortable as saying our prayers in windy weather on Salisbury Common. Even the parish church is too open and exposed. We must coterize off into innumerable sects; build our special and peculiar Ebenezers; and entrench ourselves warmly, snugly, and invisibly in our own private pews. If we are wealthy, we wall in long stretches of landscape, and imagine that the exclusion of our poorer brethren enhances our own enjoyment of lawn and stream and forest-glade; we lay embargoes even upon wide moun-

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tain-wastes, for the temporary protection of the little birds that we shoot at, by ourselves, for a week or two in autumn. We attend no parks, promenades, or musical reunions, if they are frequented by what is called 'common people'; and herein we seem forgetful of the vision seen by Peter, when the Roman captain was nearing his wicket-gate. If we are professional men, we keep trade at a distance; trade, again, has innumerable sections, all socially repellent of one another. There are grades of rank in our kitchens; and the cook and table-maid will retire after dinner to their bedrooms, to imitate the exclusiveness of their employers, by eating their pie or pudding out of sight of buttons and the scullery-maid. The vast expenditure of money upon the decoration of our houses is all due to this ungenerous spirit of isolation. We wish to have our own petty museums of pictures, engravings, shells, and nick-nacks; our own libraries; our own upholstery trumpery miracles. The antipathy to expansion clings to us on our death-beds, whereon, if we would fain dispose of some of our gains in the great cause of education, we leave this or that annual amount to the Burrows of St. Ignavia, open to all competitors, with a

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special preference to such candidates as may have been born in the parish of St. Swithin, and bear the surname of Muggins.

In one of his lesser speeches the great orator of Athens tells us that in his day it was difficult or impossible to track out the dwelling-places of the founders of his country's greatness, though only a few generations had elapsed between his own day and theirs. But plain to all beholders were the public monuments of their taste and magnificence and public spirit; the very remnants of which to our own times are the objects of admiration, envy, despair. The greatness of a people can only be built upon individual self-abnegation. A people may not be divided against itself, but subdivided within itself; and such a people need not fall, but it cannot rise and expand. The coral island rises in the sea, because the building of each minute insect is in its totality a particle of foundation for further superstructure. No one tiny mason antagonizes with his neighbour. No one molecule wastes into an unprofitable decay. No efforts of the builders are spent in neutralizing actions and reactions, but all work spontaneously upwards with an invincible unanimity.

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Were I a sojourner in a strange land, and anxious to gauge the extent of its refinement and civilisation, I should be comparatively indifferent to such indices of its wealth as the splendour of private equipages, the luxury of private entertainments, the gorgeousness of house-furniture, the exotics of walled-in gardens; but I should visit the theatres, which are—or should be—the schools of taste and morality to the multitude; the public gardens, the public museums, the public libraries, the public picture-galleries, the places of public worship, the grammar-schools, where the hope of the nation should be hatching intellectually; the colleges, where her youth should be essaying their wings for future flight. I should think lowly of a nation, however great her commerce, however multitudinous her population, however old her nobility, if I found vulgar, commonplace, and mischievous sensationalism upon her theatre-boards; useless impracticable studies foisted on her children; and similar studies, mingled with a servile deference to things undeserving of academic respect, flourishing—or decaying—in her highest seats of learning. I should consider that, if such a nation were great and powerful, her greatness

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and power were due to the impetus of a past time, whose opportune and reasonable institutions had been conserved with piety, until piety had degenerated into superstition, and utility had mouldered into mischief.

It is ill with the stream when the water at the spring is bitter. A very few years ago the London University was almost invariably mentioned with epithets of a foolish and ungenerous contempt by members of the more ancient foundations. The ancient College of Dublin has, until a very recent date, exhibited a jealousy, unworthy of herself, towards the recently-founded Queen's Colleges. Indeed, on one occasion some six professors of the latter were treated with marked rudeness at her hall table, simply and obviously on account of the new connection they had formed; simply and obviously so, as every one of them had been a highly distinguished alumnus of the old foolishly jealous Alma Mater. The tide, in England especially, seems set so powerfully in towards improvement, that before many years we would fain hope that all marks of discussion and jealousy and disparagement will have been washed away. Supposing honesty, then, and respectability as granted, the rewards

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of institutions pretending to the character of national academic bodies should be the perquisites of ability, irrespectively of all considerations of creed, parentage, means, or place; the only aristocracies recognised within their walls should be those of industry, intellectuality, and morality; the only vulgarities branded with contempt, those of idleness, stupidity, and vice.

While we advocate catholicity as to creed, rank, and locality, we would advocate a like generosity as to the subjects of study. The two favoured branches in Cambridge, our most generous Alma Mater, have hitherto been 'Classics' and 'Mathematics.' Let us preserve the old names, but generalize their significations. Language and science are eternal; their childhood is hidden from us by an impenetrable veil of obscurity; their maturity, we know, is not yet reached; their old age is in a futurity beyond our conception. The *patois* of a Swiss villager is full of interest to a philologer; the amusement of a lad with any gas may suggest something to the oldest chemist; the sailing of a child's boat may be a lesson to a mechanician. The word 'university' is said by some to mean 'the place for study of the full curriculum of the world's knowledge.'

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Let us accept the interpretation, and act upon its accuracy. Since the days when the silver age of Roman literature shed a dim light upon Europe, new languages and new literatures have been evoked; the geometric knowledge of the Alexandrines and the natural science of Aristotle have branched off into numerous channels. Why should any single one channel be left unexplored?

A plausible objection meets us on the outset of our proposition. The subjects of human study are now so numerous that it would be impossible for any length of days ever attained to prosecute even desultorily the totality. Every single subject is now so exhaustively treated, that only consummate ability, aided by unusual industry, can be expected to open out new paths. The objection is only a plausible one. A university is, after all, but a training-school for youth and early manhood. Its function is to awaken curiosity, not to develop faculties to their full extent. It is with the studies of youth as with human food; the more varied they are, within reasonable limits, the more healthful they are found. To discard altogether the learning and science of antiquity would be suicidal; it would

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be like climbing up a ladder and calling to one's friends to saw off the lower extremities. But to adhere to them exclusively would be to cling to the ladder's lower steps for fear of tumbling higher up.

The question becomes: What is the meaning of the terms 'Classics' and 'Mathematics?' The former word meant originally: 'Ordinary,' 'Regular,' 'Ranked;' and the latter: 'Subjects of learning.' Into the former category have crept the works of Dante, Ariosto, Tasso, Alfieri, Montaigne, Pascal, Corneille, Racine, Molière, Descartes, Buffon, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Comte, Lessing, Richter, Kant, Schiller, Goethe, Shakespeare, Milton, Gibbon, Cervantes, Lopez di Vega, Calderon. If these are not classics, who are more deserving of the title, if the nomenclature be a title of honour?

It would be impossible for me to measure the extent or utility of what is usually termed 'Mathematics.' But I know this much of it practically, that students have been known to climb to high eminences in its abstract departments, who, in facing a class of young students, or a lecture-room crammed with a popular audience, have been unable to explain the mechanism of

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the steam-engine, the action of the tides, the movements of the planets, the application of the barometer, the air-pump, the syringe, the electroscope, the voltaic pile and its modifications; unable to explain in clearly intelligible terms the means by which a message is sent like lightning through a wire, or the laws upon which a railway bridge of metal is formed.

So long as an exhaustive knowledge of Latin and Greek literature is required, so long as students are called upon to drink the lees with the wine, it would be cruel to task their faculties with the mastering of extraneous literature, however beautiful, however valuable. So long as our present—chiefly analytical—course of mathematics taxes the physical strength of the best constitution to overtake, it would be equally cruel to impose an extra feather of burthen. But it is possible to take off, in order to put on. To my own mind it seems an incongruous thing to fix by any arbitrary line the limit of Italian speech and thought. I hold that what we call 'Italian' is the tongue by which we should approach what we call 'Latin;' and that the student who can read Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Livy, Tacitus, and Juvenal, is only half-

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read in one tongue unless he can read with equal ease and delight the works of Dante, Ariosto, Tasso, and Alfieri. But, whilst I am of opinion that Italian and Latin literature should be considered as one, I would give a separate niche to the literatures of Spain, England, France, and Germany. A classical Tripos should allow competition to students in any or all of these literatures. I would suggest that every competitor should qualify himself in one of the two most ancient; but I am sure of this, that a youthful student must have gone through arduous and useful toil who can translate freely and accurately a passage from a great writer in Spanish, French, or German, if he can at the same time prove his real mastery of the special language *by a long exercise accurately and idiomatically written in its prose.*

I am a pleader for the discarding of useless antiquities, and of the introduction of everything useful in modern attainment into our academic curricula. Is it because I undervalue the debt due to ancient thought? God forbid! My life has hitherto been spent almost entirely with the thinkers of a dead world. They are my companions in every vacation. I have spent

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a life as it were in the catacombs. I have read and read again of alien antique master-works with a relish that I seldom find in the perusal of any copatriot author, with the one exception of our unapproachable dramatist; some thirty years of constant intercourse have made their languages familiar to me as was my Mother's voice—alas! long, long ago.

No, reader, it is not that I disparage them that I wish them to be less freely handled. It is because I reverence them; because I think that they are mauled and fingered and squeezed and kneaded out of shape and taste and perfume and beauty by universal, irreverent, unintelligent, and premature usage. I would rather that their study were not so uselessly and mischievously anticipated; and, when their study were begun, I would rather that the attention of our youth were directed solely to what they contain of noble, invigorating, and still fresh instruction, than that their wits should be wasted for years in wandering over fields devoid of interest, and perusing or imitating what had better be ignored or forgotten for ever.

Furthermore, I am anxious to preach, while I have a pulpit allowed me, a short sermon against

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divorce. I recognise no ancient civilisation, no new. I can detect no epoch in the world's intellectual history when God drew a separating line between new things and old. I know of no mental deluge that cast up upon an Ararat any modern Noah with modern sons. Half of the knowledge that we all possess is older than the hills; and the oldest knowledge is new to each one of us on its first acquisition. At all events, if our dualistic predilections—so strikingly manifested in all our religious systems,—insist upon an adjusted balance of antiquity and hodiernity, we must bring in our moral and mental sympathies to correct the specious but incorrect suggestions of our clocks. We must disregard conventional dates, and remember that Cicero is as near to us as Wolsey; that Augustus and Charlemagne are nearer to us than Frederick and Napoleon; that Cœur-de-lion was a contemporary of Achilles; that our corporeally surviving ritualists were intellectually dead and buried and rotten three hundred years ago; and that our honest old tough-hided Tories, our militia-colonels and landlords in Ireland, are, politically speaking, still weltering in præadamite ooze with a kindred race of

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unimprovable and impenetrable saurians. We must preach and act upon the doctrine that the right measure of knowledge is not that it be fashionable, trite, or curiously antique, or temporarily and personally useful; but that it be true and eternal in its essence, and universally useful and comforting and strengthening and ennobling and good.

When God made the world, and in the world the Garden of Eden, He looked down upon His works; and, behold, they were *all* very good. Among His works was the tree of knowledge. The mission of man is to endeavour, with God's favour, to transmute the fruit of that tree from a curse into a blessing of blessings; to bruise its leaves, and assuage withal the pains and sorrows incidental to weakness and mortality; to work out the ultimate purpose of Him who planted it, and who made it and us and everything for good.

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VIII.

BOYHOOD AND SCHOOL.

I AM only partially interested in the great question of university reform. I am still in heart, where for twelve years I was in reality, alternately in the schoolroom and the school-yard. The wind that blows among the pines upon the mountain-tops may leave a nursery garden on the lowlands in repose; and mental movements on academic heights may for a while leave the flats of school life untroubled. But only for a while. The concussion of the atmosphere will be eventually felt in every crevice open to space.

We may consider that for the first seven years at least of his life a boy should be left to the almost exclusive care of women. My remarks here, and indeed my remarks in general, refer chiefly to those favoured classes in the com-

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munity wherein woman can afford to consider her mission as an indoors one. Not that I lack sympathy for the classes less favoured, but that my actual experience has been partial and circumscribed.

After, then, seven years of wise and kindly maternal or quasi-maternal superintendence, and two years of such preparatory schooling as, to the best of my knowledge, only Edinburgh can give in an approach to perfection, let our child be carried by us, in imagination, and left in one of the nine great schools of England. But, after leaving him thus, let us retire for a long solitary walk, and indulge in reflections upon the capacities and tastes of early boyhood. Let us become in fancy boys ourselves again, and let us ask of ourselves to what kind of schooling we should involuntarily wish to be submitted; and, with the experience that manhood has given us, let us endeavour to rid ourselves of crotchets either of personality or of association, and to bear in mind the unerring wisdom of our common mother, Nature.

A boy of ten has, as a general rule, no introspective or reflective powers; and, if he had them, they would be of little use. It would be

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as though a thing that ate nothing should be gifted with organs of digestion. But he has hands quick for work, good or evil ; an ear quick to hear, eyes observant to every movement, colour, and shape around him. If he were taken to a review, he would bring back with him a better notion than a newspaper could give us of the uniform of every regiment, of such military movements as he could follow, and would probably hum some of the airs played by the military bands. If his rambles took him habitually among shipping, he would learn the rig of every vessel, the name of every rope, the flags and signals of many nations. If he went to a menagerie, he would, unbidden, note the forms and colours of every living creature ; and not a form or colour so noted down among his invisible memoranda would be lost sight of or forgotten, until death or its approach should have dulled for ever his faculties. We never forget a shape, a colour, a tune, a taste, or a smell. We may be, at times, unable to recall them at will ; but a chance circumstance or an uneasy dream may bring them back to us after thirty years of supposed forgetfulness. After ten or twenty years of absence in foreign climes a man may return home, and

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be served at dinner with some dish that was a favourite in his boyhood, and the taste will be as familiar to him as though he had partaken of it only yesterday. You may hear at times a tune casually whistled in the streets that will send you back to the verge of your nursery, and cause for a little while in your heart and eyes a singularly painful but sweet fulness.

Again, if we take a boy from lecture-room to lecture-room of the Polytechnic Institution, he will drink in greedily all he hears from the chemist; will listen, wondering and delighted, to the story of the stars; will touch tremblingly the rod surcharged with electricity; will gaze, bewildered but curious, at a hundred whizzing, unintelligible, but—as he knows—useful machines; will see a fairyland in the wonders of dissolving views; will return home with the religious—the reasonably religious—conviction upon his awakened mind that the world all around him is full of beauties and marvels; and he will very possibly have a dim idea that throughout all this manifestation of beauties and marvels there is in operation a subtle, mysterious, but never failing Law.

This divine curiosity it is the peculiar privilege of ordinary schoolmasters to stifle. And yet it

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is this same curiosity that, under varying times, ages, and circumstances, set Copernicus at work among the planets; Cuvier mapping out the animated world; Watt busy with steam and intricacies of mechanism; Parry and Ross voyaging from pole to pole. It is this very curiosity whose healthy working is necessary for the material well-being and the intellectual health of the human species. It is an instinct in itself so strong that nothing but continued and persistent efforts could possibly succeed in neutralizing or deadening its action. But human ingenuity is allowed occasionally—some would say for wise reasons—to override the regulations of nature. At all events, it has succeeded in the melancholy attempt most effectually in the fashionable rearing of nine-tenths of the children of well-to-do English parents. Happily the narcotic system in vogue with the sons of nobles, proprietors, and professional men, is not permitted to descend in action to the sons of artisans and labourers.

For the first four years of public-school life the time of a boy will be devoted chiefly—I might almost say, with a trifling exaggeration, exclusively—to the mastering of his Latin

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grammar. In other words, he will set upon an abstract study of a logical kind, such as only the minority of mature intellects could ever thoroughly digest, and such as only the minority of this minority could ever enjoy. For weary years he will be traversing dull uninteresting patches of classic ground; stumbling in a twilight of intelligence; groping his way by the bewildering beams of dim flickering lamp-lights. In his journey over waste and morass he will be accompanied by a guide, who will be clad in an appropriate uniform of mysterious black, the sable livery of primeval Night. He will ever and anon ask for a sign, and there will no sign be given to him, excepting such as the grim humour of his oracular guide shall vouchsafe to give. He will be told of nouns that are parisyllabic, imparisyllabic, collective, heterogeneous, heteroclite, and mobile; of pronouns and particles correlative, which branch into interrogatives, demonstratives, relatives, indefinites, and universals, while these last-mentioned branch off again into universals relative and indefinite, universals alternative, universals distributive and inclusive, and universals exclusive; he will hear of conjunctions subordinate and co-ordinate; of cases

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that are objective-genitive, or subjective-genitive; of verbs with guttural, dental, labial, liquid, and anomalous stems—strange forest trees; of verbs with periphrastic conjugations; of verbs finite, infinite, substantive, transitive, intransitive, active, passive, deponent, quasi-passive, semi-deponent, defective, inceptive, frequentative, desiderative, anomalous, factitive or *quid-quales*, purely trajective or *cuis*, trajective-transitive or *cui-quids;* of verbs with moods indicative, imperative, potential, conjunctive, conditional, concessive, optative, dubitative, hortative, historico-infinitive, and prolate-infinitive; of adverbs consecutive, final, causal, temporal, conditional, concessive, comparative; of relations—never heard of in his own home—epithetic, attributively enthetic, adverbially enthetic, complemental, annexive, circumstantive, predicative, prolative, receptive, proprietive; of gerundive attractions—to him inattractive; of gerundives with attributive constructions—upon which he can put no construction; of asyndetons, complements, congruents, copulas, ellipses, enclitics, entheses, direct and oblique enunciations, syncopes, syneses, apodoses, and protases; and concerning all these mysteries he will probably have his information communi-

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cated—mercifully, if not necessarily—in an unknown tongue. God help us! We live in a queer world! At all events, I have been for thirty years a diligent student and teacher of two—to boys, and perhaps to me—unknown tongues, and I feel a difficulty now in putting a definite interpretation upon many of the terms above quoted.

You may be possibly under the idea that I am going back to the days of my own schooling, and quoting from manuals nominally in use but virtually superseded. *I am quoting entirely from a small elementary manual issued only a year ago, and prepared by an assembly of some ten of the most learned head-masters in England with the express view of remedying such deficiencies in elementary education as had been brought to light by a recent Government Commission of Inquiry.* With many terms of the above ludicrous and almost unintelligible jargon I was familiar in my own earlier days; but a very considerable number of the terms appear to be of recent invention. The method of cure adopted was a singular one for a people laying claim to practicality, but not a singular one for what is in absolute fact the most anomalous and eccentric people in the known world. It was a scholastic

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canonization of the doctrines of homœopathy. The public schools under existing administration were found to be in a deplorably faulty condition in regard to their system of general, but especially of early, mental training, and the remodelment was left in the hands of the faulty administrators. A circumstance was forgotten which, while it may palliate past blunderings in the principal or authoritative agents, calls itself for correction; and that is the singular fact that the head-masters of our wealthiest schools usually proceed directly from college fellowships to the enjoyment of their lucrative and honourable posts; *that very few of them have ever taught a class of children for a single day.* In many cases, they bring with them academic associations and prejudices, which are as ill-adapted for school management as are the duties of head-mastership for the discharge of episcopal functions. In the present case, the evil to remedy was a mental epidemic amongst our children. Had the sufferers, their mothers, or their grandmothers, been taken into council, it would have been ascertained that the disease was one of chronic cerebral congestion induced by an undue

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admixture of indigestible abstracts in their daily school-food. Complete rest for a while, with instant change of air and diet, would have been modestly suggested by these unprofessional uninspired simpletons. As it was, the chiefs of the scholastic faculty held a secret and solemn meeting, and, disdaining the preliminaries of asking questions, examining tongues, and feeling pulses, proceeded to diagnose the disease in question by a careful and elaborate study of the works of Hippocrates, Aristotle, Celsus, and Galen. The means employed were gigantically, and indeed dangerously, out of proportion to the work on hand. A man may shoot with a howitzer at a rook on his house-top. He may kill the rook; but in doing so he may knock his house to pieces. However, the Council sat, deliberated, and prescribed. 'More logic' was the prescription ultimately issued. A Highlander living in a very remote district, to which, owing to happy difficulties of position, the presence of a practitioner was denied, was asked what steps were taken in cases of sudden illness in his neighbourhood. 'We give them whisky:' was the reply. 'But supposing they don't mend?' 'Then we give them more.'

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It may seem presumption in me to criticise the work of so many heads, every one of which is unquestionably crammed with learning. The grounds upon which I venture to speak my opinion in strongest and most unqualified terms are, firstly: That—whilst in natural abilities and acquired learning I may be vastly inferior to every one of the compilers of the *New Latin Catechism* or *Manual of Darkness*—in industry, zeal, and enthusiastic love of classical studies I am on a par with any one of them; and, secondly: That in the first twelve of my fifteen years of scholastic life I was engaged for three hours,—in other words, for half my time of daily work,—*during five days of the week, over ten months in the year, with an elementary class of boys, varying in number from forty to seventy;* and, thirdly: That even during the last three years *I have had in the management of an Alpha-Beta class one-fourth part of my professorial duties.* My experience has taught me, what common sense might have taught me at the outset, that it is inexpedient to make a dead language the sole instrument in educating and training a boy's faculties; and that, if the exclusive use of that instrument be persisted in, from inability to find

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either other means or work-people able to employ other means, it is useless, not to say mischievous and cruel, to use that special instrument in a way contrary to the analogies of Nature's own showing. In other words, if Latin be essential, I contend that it should be deferred, at the least, until an average pupil shall have turned the age of twelve; and that, when at length taught, it should be taught by proceeding very gradually from unconscious handling towards an introspective process; from particulars to generals; from practice to theory; from objective illustration and separate statement to subjective consideration and comprehensive principle; in plain words, *by beginning at the beginning and ending with the end.*

The same law of nature—of proceeding from easy to hard, from simplicity to complexity, from messages sent by the senses to the brain to messages sent from the brain outwards,—should be pursued in all studies. It is as unphilosophical to commence the study of geometry by the abstract definition of a point, a line, a surface, or a circle, as to puzzle a child's brain with the logical and metaphysical jargon of grammar. The study of pure logic, the logical and scientific

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study of grammar, and the strictly logical study of geometry are closely related to one another; are beyond the faculties of the great majority of intelligent boys of fourteen, and should be reserved for the closing years of school life or the lecture-rooms of an university. Had I to teach a little fellow between ten and twelve years of age the elements of geometry, I should be content if, on my asking him what a circle was, he replied mutely by drawing one on a piece of paper with a pair of compasses. In short, I should consider that this instrument, together with a pair of scissors, some sheets of card-board and a few blocks of deal wood, would be more useful for a long while than a bushel of definitions; and, again, I would never puzzle a young learner's head by making him repeat those logically worded propositions which prove what to him and every one else outside of Bedlam are self-evident facts; and, in his proving the harder and more interesting ones, I should allow him to proceed in a rough, rude, practical, and mechanical way. How many a child by such a process would be helped comfortably over the 'Pons Asinorum!' And how many an intelligent urchin would be spared the perplexing facility of

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proving that two extraneously touching circles cannot have a common centre,—that husband and wife, walking ever so lovingly arm-in-arm, cannot be in possession of a common liver!

With regard to the supposed *sine-quâ-non* of Latin, I would recommend that, whether its study were attempted unwisely before, or prudently not before, the age of twelve, it should in either case be approached through the medium of modern Italian—taught, of course, upon a simple and natural plan. And incidentally I would remark, that I should hesitate to propose with my friend, Professor Blackie, a like intermediate usage of modern Hellenic; for, whilst the language of Dante to that of Virgil would seem to be related as summer flower to spring blossom, the dialect of modern Athens to that of Plato would appear to stand in the relation of stalk to flower. After, then, a thorough course of some easy and graduated Italian manual, a pupil might be taken through the four Gospels. The parables should, after being studied in the original, be read from off the English text; and afterwards, with the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and other familiar formulæ, committed to memory. Some such

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pleasant play as *La Locandiera* of Goldoni might be carefully read and grammatically —not exhaustively—analysed, before ever a Latin grammar were put into a boy's hands. The vowel sounds of the most musical, liquid, dulcet of modern languages are easily caught —the only difficulty being the double pronunciation of the vowel *o;* and the semi-synthetic and semi-analytic character of the language has much in common with the synthesis of ancient Latin and the analysis of our own tongue. Furthermore, if our pupil be enabled to prosecute his studies to the full hereafter, he will come to love and reverence those great Italians, who are the connecting links between the dead past and the living present; who helped not a little to inspire our Chaucer, our Shakspeare, our Milton; who were in fact the grey Fathers of modern literature. He will be led unconsciously to regard the course of human thought as moving in a regular and continuous curve, and not as taking great zigzag leaps through interjacent darkness from peak to peak of centuries.

But, though language and geometry were taught upon the most simple, philosophic, and natural

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principles, still they would not be enough to occupy the mind entirely. 'Man may not live by bread alone,' spiritually, physically, or mentally. The uniformity of mutton dinners in ancient Eton was, perhaps, less prejudicial to the physical growth of her lads than the monotony of Latin verse to the development of their brains.

And this incidental mention of Latin verse compels me to digress a little. Indeed, the subject never fails to set my mind upon a train of composite reflection. A year or two ago, at a house where I was staying on a visit in Dublin, I observed a young friend, of eighteen or nineteen, who seemed pale with overwork, to carry always a certain book under his arm. On my alluding to the circumstance, I was informed that he slept with it under his pillow. The book was a well-known manual for composition in Latin verse. The youth, who was possessed of average abilities, but had no special call for versification, read daily with a private tutor; had done so for years; and an important part of each day's work was to compose some half a dozen lines or more of English prose into metrical Latin *proser*. To my great delight my friend brought

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me an exercise one day for correction; and, knowing me to be a former alumnus of an English university, he spoke regretfully of his want of progress in the study so generally cultivated. Having now obtained an opportunity for free speech, I advised the youth to take the treasured volume, and descend with it into the kitchen, and, after raking with the shovel a passage in the fire, to ram the said book within the open passage, and wait until it were entirely consumed. My advice was virtually, if not literally, taken; for the book was never opened from that day, and the youth has been ever since a more ardent —and to my mind a more intelligent and improving—student of classical literature than he could have been with the weight of an impossible accomplishment acting as a clog upon his courage and his energies.

Whilst, however, I look upon every hour spent on Latin and Greek verse as in ninety-nine out of one hundred cases absolutely wasted time, I think that collegiate honour-students should be regularly and methodically drilled in the composition of Latin and Greek prose. Indeed, I know of no one mental operation more widely and generally wholesome than the render-

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ing of a complex Latin paragraph into nervous idiomatic English, unless it be that of rendering a passage from a good native author into terse, pointed, accurate Latin. *I have found, however, from experience that Italian and French only yield to Latin in utility as educational instruments in the comparative paucity of case-inflexions.* They thus lose somewhat in regard to brevity and compactness; but in the subtle management of mood in interdependent sentences the modern pair are as perfect as their grand original. Indeed, Latin speech seems, to me to stand towards Italian and French in the relation of a reserved and stately mother towards two daughters, of whom one is graceful in every gesture and voluptuously beautiful, and the other captivating with vivacity and brilliant with wit. I am of opinion that we should lead a pupil to write translations into Greek prose only so far and so often as to rivet his attention upon peculiarities in style and manner of the immediate object of his passing study. Thus, while a pupil were reading Thucydides, he might with advantage translate two short passages per week from an English historian into Thucydidean Greek; and a similar cotemporaneous

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plan might be adopted by the student of Herodotus, Plato, and Aristotle. *But any one of the three other languages is a far better instrument than Greek for inculcating and exemplifying the rules of general abstract grammar.* The luxuriance of Greek verbiage and the graceful carelessness in regard to sequence of mood and time may possibly combine with other and weightier causes to render the perusal of such a book as the *Phædo* a mental treat of purest delight; but to attempt from its ever-shifting constructions to draw up systematic rules of correct speech were as impossible as to mirror one's countenance in a pool of crystal water as it rippled beneath a passing breeze. The genius of Alcibiades was not more perplexingly variable than the turns in cadence and construction throughout the dialogues of Plato; and that singleness of purpose by which the Roman achieved the mastery of the world is as clearly indicated in the unswerving correctness of his grammatical usages as in the unswerving directness of his military roads. But to revert to the consideration of variety in mental pabulum.

Long before a child can take an interest in

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political or historic geography, he can, especially with the aid of pictures and specimens, be brought to take a hearty interest in accounts of glaciers, waterfalls, rivers, forests, deserts, prairies, hurricanes, ocean-currents ; in the habits of birds and beasts and fishes and creeping things ; he will be amused in learning to distinguish every tree, plant, grass, flower and fern he may meet withal on a holiday ramble ; and his curiosity will be healthily awakened if, in a room full of mechanical contrivances, he daily witnesses and experimentalizes upon the extraordinary powers of levers, wedges, pulleys, toothed-wheels, and screws, as they act singly or in numbers, alone or in combination.

From early childhood, so soon as the hand can trace a definite line or figure, the hand and eye should be brought to co-operate with one another ; in plain words, a child should be led to amuse himself with drawing to the best of his abilities every visible object that interests him. Throughout the school-life of all boys drawing should be seriously pursued. Singing in parts and choruses should go side by side with drawing. The two branches would give the æsthetic element in education, the lack of which accounts

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for no small amount of the vulgarity that characterizes us as a people. It certainly is quite possible for men to rub on in a comfortable way, to exhibit industry and energy in the amassing of large fortunes, without their discriminating between elegance and uncouthness, shapeliness and disproportion, harmony and discord. But education should prepare us for endeavours much more complex than such as have in view only the accumulation of money. It is almost impossible to follow for years aims purely personal without coming at last upon the verge of selfishness or even of dishonesty. But, while a dishonest man is the enemy of his species, an honest man may be but a lukewarm friend. We are bound by an imperative law to step over honesty into the path of voluntary well-doing. Nay, more; we do not entirely fulfil our duty towards our neighbour by benefiting him, unless we please him as well. For, in order that man as a social being should be perfect, his motives should be pure and unselfish, his actions should be regulated by sound judgment, and his manners should be controlled by a rapidly and unconsciously discriminative taste; and the promotion of good manners will be greatly

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furthered by a due attention to æsthetics in early training.

Again, throughout the early school-life of a boy lessons in dictation should alternate, day and day about, with lessons in drawing. These lessons would, to some extent, mutually help one another, for correct spelling partakes almost as much of mechanical visual measurement as of a purely intellectual process. Furthermore, long after a boy may be able to spell correctly, he may learn something from writing daily, or on alternate days, carefully worded passages in his own tongue. Such exercises might in fact neutralize much of the mischief done by his lessons—as now administered—in Latin.

The studies of history and ordinary geography should be interlinked. I am averse to the so-called teaching of history in scraps. Boys might be left alone to read at home, or in a school library, an entire reign or epoch; and should be desired to obtain against a definite day from all possible sources information illustrative of the time appointed for investigation. The lesson, when given, should be made to partake of the character of a lecture; maps and pictures should be freely used; and, as copiously illustrated

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books would be too expensive for ordinary purses, it would be supplying a public want to his own profit if some enterprising publisher would issue a series of historical charts, illustrative of the costumes, habits, house-furniture, shipping, and architecture of different countries in different epochs. Some of these historic maps might contain lists of representative names, printed in large type, so arranged as to illustrate a reign, a century, or an epoch; and portraits might be added wherever attainable. Others again might be historico-geographic charts representing severally the empire of Alexander, the Roman empire under Augustus, the Saracenic empire, the Western empire under Charlemagne, Europe as in the days of Charles V., Europe as immediately before and after the peace of Westphalia, Europe as during the empire of Napoleon, and Europe as it is to-day. Ordinary geographical and physical maps of the two hemispheres would of course be included in our mural decorations. In fact, the walls of a school-room might be made a picture-gallery of information in the fields of physical geography, historic geography, historic incident, and biography. Such decorations would materially

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assist a teacher, as in his lectures he were earnestly endeavouring to withdraw the attention of his boys from the pomps and vanities of courts and battle-fields to the real work effected by wise legislators, large-minded statesmen, philosophic thinkers, enterprising discoverers, scientific inventors ; from the periodic but happily unabiding mischief effected by selfish monarchs and ram-stam conquerors to the ennobling and enduring influences exerted by poets, scholars, painters, sculptors, architects, and musicians ; from the petty considerations of town or county to the more generous considerations of nationality, and from these latter, in due time, to the still higher considerations of our common humanity.

Before we parted company with our boys, we should be giving them as much of pleasure as of profit, if we delivered, or caused to be delivered to them, short courses of elementary lectures, freely interspersed with oral discussion, upon the constitutional laws and civil jurisprudence of their native land, and upon the laws that regulate the accumulation of wealth. We should also be dealing cruelly with them, if we turned them out into a world full of temptations at an age wherein

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impulse is stronger than judgment, and at the same time withheld from them all knowledge of the chief laws that regulate health, physical and mental.

Again, education should never be specially grooved to suit this or that profession, to prepare for this or that competitive examination. A wise father will distrust any system that is advertised to prepare for this or that university, for Woolwich, or the Indian Civil Service. Unless the opening of situations to competition can be made consistent with broad, healthy, lengthened, and authoritatively systematic curricula of instruction, our new system will be productive of at least as much mischief as advantage. Cram-systems and exclusively professional instruction can flourish only where learning is valued solely for the material advantages it may bring. They are founded in selfishness, and tend to the unwholesome introduction or maintenance of caste-divisions. It is from the lack of a healthy catholicity in our views in the matter of instruction that our society is artificially and geometrically divided, like the body of the earth with its strata, like a map with its lines of latitude and longitude.

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I am continually hearing of schools for the 'lower' classes, schools for the 'middle' classes, schools for 'upper' classes of the wealthy and the noble. I have at times wondered whether the sons of gardeners, attorneys, and dukes are as radically different one from the other as the young of dogs, weasels, and whales. This triple classification of English society has reminded me of that curious mountain in ancient Lycia, the head of which was tenanted by lions, the waist by goats, and the foot by serpents. For my own part, I plead guilty to a superstitious love of simplicity; and I hold, and shall hold to the end of my life, that a boy is a boy, and a girl a girl; that, in the purely mental training of our pupils, we ought not to regard their sex or station or expectations, but simply and solely their age and strength and mental capacities. I do not believe that human brains, under dissection, could be categorized into male and female, aristocratic and plebeian. If Latin need not be taught to the son of an artisan, it should only be because he will be called from school to earn his living at an age before such a study should by rights be commenced by any lad

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in any rank of life. But, so long as he is allowed to remain at school—and the longer the better—he will be as much improved as his richer young neighbour in learning to write flowingly, read easily, spell correctly, and draw accurately if not tastefully. He will need as much as, but not more than, the other some simple elementary knowledge of his own physical constitution, to aid him hereafter in guarding his own health and the health of others. The elements of political economy are as requisite to instil providence and common-sense into the children of proprietors as into those of poor tenants. It is a blunder founded on meanness, vulgarity, and a total misconception of man's real dignity, to suppose that a future tradesman needs only such a mental training in youth as will enable him in after life to cast up accounts correctly, read a newspaper with ease, and write a business letter without committing gross errors in spelling. It is doubtless more than probable that a youth, not destined for one of the learned professions, may be called away from school to earn his bread some years before a youth more favoured may enter an university. But, until the call come, his mental training should be as generous

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as that of any of his brethren. There is enough of dry and dull routine even in the life of a barrister; but his life and that of a speculative merchant are full of ever fresh mental and nervous activity when compared with those of a country parson and a retail trader. They who are likely to have in manhood the longest desert of monotony to pass over should store up in boyhood and youth the greatest amount of intellectual provender. How many even of our higher merchants achieve affluence by a patient monotonous reiteration of simple duties, a rapidity in computation, some special aptitude, and a lucky audacity, and wake up in after age —too late alas!—to discover that they are such beggars in non-commercial accomplishment as to lack relish at home for the riches won honourably in the counting-house! And, as a counterpart to this mistaking of a career, how many a youth is drawn on by the Will-o'-the-wisp of school and college successes into a bog of professional inutility, whose practical abilities fairly worked would have made him prosperous and useful in a sphere of commercial activity!

Again and again would I impress upon others my conviction that, in whatever of instruction we

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impart to a pupil, we should be guided only by the considerations of the pupil's age, health, and capacity. God knows, we should make very few too enlightened for their future stations!

I am thankful to be enabled to state that amongst my old Scottish pupils I number men that studied patiently, laboriously, and successfully the very refinements of scholarship, knowing all the while that their future life was to be spent in commercial or mechanico-scientific pursuits. And I, an Englishman, consider that Scotland takes the palm over my own country and the land of my present habitation chiefly from the facts that *her children below and up to the age of fourteen are the most industrious and the best taught children in our triple empire;* that in Scotland the schoolmaster,—the chief instrument in the building up of his country's wealth and reputation,—while usually denied a fair emolument and invariably denied a fair social status, is from John O'Groats to Gretna Green exhaustively, unmercifully, and—*to his employer*—profitably worked.

Reader, what I here say of Scotland I say from experience. I have known a man of humble origin in that country die at an ad-

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vanced age, leaving behind him all his four sons highly educated and holding honourable positions in professional life; I have known a pupil of my own to pass from a country school to a Scottish college, and proceed thence to Cambridge with five pounds in his pocket, and to leave Cambridge without a debt, and erelong attain by moral and intellectual merit alone to an useful and lucrative appointment; and, whilst I am writing these lines, I know that within a few miles of me, on the Dublin hills, there lives the son of a Scottish gamekeeper, a noble lad, whose name of 'Campbell'—a name second in national virtues to none in Scottish story—is not disgraced by the tenant of a petty mountain-farm of some thirty acres of almost waste ground; which acres by the industry of a few years have been made profitable beyond expectation, although during these few years the young tenant has worked from six to nine every evening, from early autumn to midsummer, with a class of some thirty peasants—children, youths, and men,—furnishing them with his barn for schoolroom, with books, pencils, slates, and all et-cæteras; treating them at the year's close with a plain but hearty feast

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of farewell; and taking no fee whatever, excepting a fee invaluable—the love of his peasant-pupils, the gratitude of their wondering parents, and the comfort of an approving conscience. This lad would seem to my eyes a man that it were an honour for any of my readers to shake warmly by the hand; a man that an Argyle or a Breadalbane might proudly claim as his kinsman. Would to God that his practical goodness were a contagious disease, and that he would run about the streets of Dublin touching thousands by the elbow!

If a nation were in a thoroughly wholesome condition, *and keenly alive to the simple truth that its real rolling capital is the physical strength, the moral habits, and the cultivated intelligence of its constituent individuals,* children of all ranks would meet for a time at school, and would only part company as the requirements of trade or profession called them away into active life. Something of this kind might have been seen in the olden days of the High School of Edinburgh, where, on the same benches, would sit for years, on mutually improving terms, the sons of nobles, lawyers, merchants, and retail traders. The curriculum of instruction has been widened in other

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rival institutions in that great capital of education; but the baneful spirit of caste has, to a great extent, been introduced—unintentionally, perhaps—by, in this one respect, unnational imitators of English systems. And we should here remark that the old public schools of England were, originally, broadly catholic institutions, not dissimilar in design and action to the High School as above described; and that even still, although the national tendency to class divisions has imperceptibly conduced to render them exclusive, there is a tone in them far more manly than is to be found in our leading private boarding-schools *or even in our two richest universities.* At all events the prevalent doctrine of class distinctions is there tacitly ignored by masters in the schoolroom, and roughly but wholesomely contravened by pupils in the play-ground. No young nobleman would be allowed for an hour to swagger about a Harrow cricket-ground with a special braiding on his jacket, and 'the boys' of our great English schools would scorn the mawkish designation of 'young gentlemen.' With all the intellectual deficiencies in these schools, I would sooner that a son of mine should pass through one of them than that he should go

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through a faultlessly complete curriculum of purely mental training in any private sea-sickening institution 'wholly restricted to the sons of gentlemen.' I would rather he came to manhood hearty in spirit and mentally undeveloped than with his brain ever so well stocked, if his sympathies had been narrowed by the vile spirit of caste.

I am aware that this Spirit cannot be exorcised from our schools so long as it is allowed to cramp, vitiate, and demoralize our social regulations, to penetrate our churches and cathedrals, to fritter down national aspirations to within the limits of petty class requirements. By many most excellent and well-intentioned people this Spirit is reverently worshipped. For my own part, I abhor it as the cause of half the ignorance, superstition, and misery in our world. It is the debasing worship of this evil Power that has made the 'middle' classes of England and Ireland objects of wonder and ridicule to European continentalists for their more than spaniel servility towards wealth, place, and rank. Allowing most willingly all reasonable and dignified respect to the obvious and universal claims of legally constituted authority, we may, for the

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sake of convenience, or in deference to harmless prejudice, or in forced obedience to unreasoning routine, tolerantly, or good-humouredly, or contemptuously admit of nominal and unimportant semblances of social distinction; but experience, common-sense, and religion teach us that the bodies of all alike require the same components of sustaining food; that the brains of all are fashioned in one mould; that the souls of all alike must approach Heaven's gates by the one narrow way.

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IX.

CHILDHOOD AND THE NURSERY.

GENTLE readers, is there one amongst you a bachelor? and past thirty by the great sun-clock in the sky?

Observe, I pray you, that I would not include in the category of celibates one whom filial or fraternal ties were detaining in the wilderness. Such an one is potentially and spiritually on the hither side of Jordan. By the term *bachelor* I mean one who, with his eyes open, in the noon-tide of his intelligence, persists causelessly and wilfully in sinning against God's prohibition of duality, and in fighting against the instincts of the whole animated creation.

Gentle readers, if there be such an one amongst you, let him take off his shoes before he cross the threshold of our nursery; for on the inner side of this door is holy ground. Or,

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rather, let him keep his shoes on, and make tracks, and skedaddle; for he is a heathen man, a publican, and uninitiated into the mysteries of the real Bona Dea, whose sacred implement is the coral and bells, and whose name on earth is Hubbard.

Begone, thou dull lump of un-Promethean clay; thou sun without a moon; thou joke without a point; thou conundrum without an answer; thou bass without a melody; thou tide ever on the ebb; thou odd without an even; thou see without a saw; thou hook without an eye; thou colourless wine; thou disconnected point in a plane replete with curves; thou word without a rhyme; thou song without words; thou ballad without tune; thou introspective, self-concentrated, halt and maimed monstrosity; thou useless, unnatural, and ungrammatical scissor, trouser, snuffer, pincer, glove, stocking, breech, and tong!

'When should a man marry?' was the question put to an ancient philosopher. 'Young men, not yet; and old men, never:' was the dry old stick's reply. The duty of marrying in mature manhood is here obviously inferred. So far the heathen cynic was wiser in his generation than a Christian Malthus. It was a beautiful custom

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in old polytheistic Athens of rich men that wished to gratify good impulses or to curry public favour, to devote large sums of superfluous wealth to the launching into matrimony of poor, portionless, stranded maidens. What a lesson is this to England, who squanders year by year more than the total revenue of Minerva's city in ploughing the sand; in transforming penniless unbelieving Jews into comfortable unbelieving tobacconists; in equipping a numerous band of missionaries to wound the feelings of Irish Catholic brethren, and bind them more closely, heart and soul, to an indecorously-vilified creed; in sowing the wind, to reap the whirlwind!

For my own part, I am only an Asophophilosopher, and consequently my opinion should go for very little; but if I were asked when members of the gentler sex should marry, I should reply: 'Young maidens, when they choose; old maidens, when they can.'

One of the difficult questions of the day is how to provide fitting occupations for women. The prominence of such a question bespeaks some flaw in our social organism. There can be no tittle of doubt but that woman's real sphere is an

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indoors and a domestic one. The annual births of children of either sex are about equal in number. If, then, in our country there be an unusual number of young women without homes and occupation, there must be a proportionate number of men saturated with an undue share of selfishness and cowardice.

It would be a difficult and a melancholy problem to solve, of how much vice and misery a man may be unconsciously the cause, who, with ample means for the maintenance of a household, lives on to fourscore a life of celibacy. It would certainly be a popular, and, for many years, a productive source of revenue, if the bachelors, after thirty and forty years of age respectively, were called on to pay twice and thrice their income-tax. This equitable load put upon the shoulders of the selfish would allow of corresponding reductions in the case of those honest citizens, the *viri trium liberorum*, that were staring fortune manfully in the face; working hard for the comfort and the joy of others; walking up the hill of life beneath a dear but heavy burthen of affections; and standing, as all true men should stand, the heat and sweat of life's busy working day.

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There has been considerable talk recently of expending public monies upon the recovering of waste lands. Unmarried men may be looked upon as an aggravated species of waste ground; as a set of irrecoverable, hopeless, and incorrigible bogs. Still, they might be put to some use. The conscription would never be an unpopular institution if its action were limited to bachelors between the ages of thirty and thirty-five. The wretches would probably make poor soldiers, having no dearer interests than those of their own carcasses to fight for. But they might advantageously be put in the front ranks, to act as buffers, and receive the first fire of the enemy. There would be no objection to the hinder ranks amusing themselves by progging these miserable buffers with their bayonets.

But, while I linger thus to express my horror of male celibacy, let it not be supposed I would draw only a rose-tinted picture of matrimony. The realities of married life will never fall beneath the anticipatory aspirations, if the condition be approached beneath a due sense of its honour and dignity. Wheresoever in wedlock is found the union of esteem and love, therein is found a happiness very different from the idle dreams

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of loverhood. Maybe there is more of prose, a great deal more of prose, in it than youth had preconceived ; but there is more of substantiality, of earnestness, of solemnity. The lover thinks to pass through a flowery walk into a bower of woodbine and honeysuckle ; to his surprise and wonder, he is led through a majestic avenue into the aisle of a great cathedral, and listens, not without tears, to the rolling music of a deep organ. Married life is not a rivulet, babbling away over shining pebbles ; it is a deep stream, now flowing with a still and modest dignity between green banks, now dashing down a rapid in foam and trouble, and sometimes lost to view beneath dark chasms.

Matrimony, again, when approached in a spirit of levity, or with a view to material profit, is, in seven cases out of ten, found more fraught with horror than the Sahara-state of celibacy. Such unions are, for the most part, anticipations of, and refinements upon, Purgatory.

There are two considerations, of which either might induce a man, in choosing a wife, to choose a good one ; and these considerations are, that there either is a future state, or that there is not. Now, in the former case, it would be a terrible

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thing for a husband to run the risk of being saddled with a wife through all eternity, that he only married in time for the sake of her money or her looks; and, in the second case, it would be just as well for a man to live his once for all with a companion that deserved and forced his love and his esteem.

But pardon, gentle reader; I have been standing all this while with my fingers on the door-handle of our child's nursery—the imaginary nursery of an ideal child. Pray, walk in; sit down where you please; and listen, if you care to listen, for a quarter of an hour to the soliloquy of an Asophophilosopher.

I can see it is with you, as with one entering St. Peter's for the first time; you are as yet unimpressed with the dimensions and capacities of the place. To the prosy eye of mature manhood is presented only a commonplace room of ordinary size, with a window looking out into a dingy back-green, with a faded carpet, some dozen or two of penny pictures pinned to a cheaply-papered wall, a few chimney-ornaments of infinitesimal price, a cat upon the hearth-rug, a cockatoo in a cage, a pile of toys and toy-boxes in a corner, and, hanging from pegs here and

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there, articles of clothing indicative of boy and woman occupation.

So seems it to our eyes; but the eyes of childhood are anointed with a divine clay. And our own eyes were so anointed long ago; but either time has rubbed off the precious unguent, or we have washed it off ourselves with careless hands. To its little proprietor this petty place is a concentrated fairyland, a garden of delight, an Eden without its tree of knowledge, an orchard of golden apples without its dragon-guard, a kingdom of cock-horses, and an empire of make-believe and perennial moonshine.

Do you see that little house with two doors upon the chimney-piece? That was the fashionable way of building houses in olden times, until an architect, superfluously cunning, discovered that one door was sufficient for two married people. The husband, you see, is in *his* lobby, and the wife is outside *her* threshold. From this circumstance, without looking at the sunshine on the floor, you may depend upon it that it is now fair weather out of doors. If it rain to-morrow, I'll wager that stupid old man will come out without his umbrella. Heaven only knows who tells them all about it!

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Observe closely those two crockery sheep, for they *are* sheep; at all events they are a good deal more like sheep than cows. These creatures go frisking about the room, when there is nobody here to see them; and cry *Baa, baa,* when there is no one within hearing. Many a time, before going to bed, we have put grass before them on the mantelpiece, and always, on awaking, we have found that these household gods, like Bel and his Dragon, had eaten all up in the night-time.

Our nursery, of course, would be ridiculously incomplete without yonder Noah's Ark. There is the crew of eight, Noah and his wife, his sons and his sons' wives; and there are all the animals, two and two, paired off matrimonially, from elephants down to cockroaches. What a sermon is this procession to all single men! I fancy that, if the patriarch had had an unmarried son, he would have gone without a coxswain, and have left the celibate behind to be drowned in the back parlour! Let us put the crew and freight on board. It must be confessed that the accommodation is very poor inside, and the ventilation unsatisfactory. One would imagine the vessel had been chartered for the British

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Government at the commencement of a continental war. However, in with them into the hold. Now, look in at the window. There is poor Shem on his back, with a beetle on his face, the size of a sheep, and a cameleopard on the pit of his stomach. God help him for the next forty days, if he suffer from sea-sickness!

And there is a wooden horse; a more remarkable one by far than that by which the Grecian chiefs took windy Troy. One of the hind-legs is broken, and the tail is gone; but the creature's speed is undiminished. You may put two chairs three yards apart, place that deplorable-looking animal on the front one, seat yourself on the one behind, with string reins in hand, and for the hour together you will ride swifter than a railway, an eagle, a hurricane; swifter than a Camilla over unbending corn; swifter than Camaralzaman on his airy voyage to his beautiful Badoura.

And here is a small tin yacht, with a pilot of tin fastened to the rudder. That vessel has sailed to lands undreamt of by Columbus, unvisited by Cook; that pilot has gone through adventures to which those of Ulysses and Sinbad are a joke. I have known that little tiny boat, in the space of one short afternoon, sail round

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and round the world, until it came to Happy-land, where the mice go when they die; where are neither cats nor traps; where the corn is always yellow; and where cream-cheese and toasted-cheese are sold at nothing-pence the pound. In windy weather, I have known that pilot sail for a good hour under water with his head downwards, and come up as fresh and hearty as ever. Not all the water in the sea could drown that walrus of a fellow!

Yon cockatoo, now snoozling ridiculously on one leg, with his beak in his coat-tail pocket, is no bird of ordinary feather. His birthday, as was heretofore the fountain of the Nile, is hidden in the mist of immemorial farawayness. He sat upon papa's shoulder in that inconceivably remote geological period when the latter was but a tiny boy, and went to school, and suffered tribulation in the body and in the spirit like other boys. That bird is consecrated by paternal memories of school and college. In the day-dawn of his life he was, of course, jet-black, like daws, and rooks, and crows, and ravens; but innumerable winters have blanched him with a perpetual hoar-frost; and, typical of wisdom, age, and death, the bird sits clothed in a vener-

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able surplice, a changeless nightgown, an anticipatory shroud.

That shawl and bonnet you see hanging there belong not to the nurse. We have, indeed, a little nursery-maid; but she is seldom in this room, and her duties are very limited. Those articles of clothing, so plain and homely, belong to the boy's dear grandmother. And happy are the chickens reared underneath such wings! The existence of this good woman in our new-fangled world is a blunder in chronology. She is a real daughter of Abraham, and came to us straight out of the book of Genesis. She carries about with her the fragrant odour of a hundred old-world virtues, one half of which were out of fashion in the days of our great-grandfathers. She is a woman of few words; but there is in her a wisdom that cometh not by observation, or the reading of books, but by inheritance, or by some secret way known only to our Maker. From the look of her you would say she came of an old line of English yeomen, such as in life owed no man anything save the love due from one to other, and that died in the fear of God and at peace with all mankind. But she is, withal, a great hypocrite, this dear, good soul, this sweet-

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heart of a grandmother; for she makes so little of her own good deeds, and speaks so little, so nothing harm of others, that you would never give her credit for having chosen in heart the one thing needful, but would take her only for an aged Martha, careful of much serving. It is only by a never-failing goodness, a kindness inexhaustible, a providence in little things, that sits easily and comfortably upon her, like a long-worn garment, that she betrays her real character, and in the presence of those who know and love her stands convicted of pure and genuine and spiritual Christianity.

Under this wise and gentle guardian our boy is growing up ignorant of bogeys, fearless of ghosts and bugbears of the dark, unconscious altogether of the existence of poor dear Old Nick. There is no more idea of putting washy tracts into his hands than of putting such food down his throat as would superinduce an artificial dysentery. He is as yet innocent, and I trust will long be innocent, of catechism. He has as yet no lines of latitude and longitude to separate the orthodox from the hopeless. We have not as yet ventured to map out for him the attributes of Divinity as a phrenologist rectangulates the

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possibilities of a human brain. We have not as yet coerced for him the Infinite within the limits of our Procrustes-bed. Our little one is as yet all unconscious of the generally believed wickedness of all around him. He would as yet be shocked if I told him—what I do not believe—that God is partial, and that they whom he, the little goose, loves best, are, perhaps, unconscious castaways. The little fellow has, in fact, never heard a sermon. Blissful state of baptized heathenism! We are in no hurry about his hearing one. His toys are never put away on Sundays. I myself have read Cock Robin to him in church hours. I do not think it will be put down in black and italics against me in the great book. But the child has his own prayers too; very short ones, but very good. The chief one is the brief but divine encyclopædia of all prayer; and the adjuncts are simple blessings, which, unlike the church prayers of many of us grown-up people, go right up through the ceiling and the roof, past the clouds, in amongst the angels, are listened to by his own mother and my mother, and are heard and answered by our common Father. God be thanked:—I, a sinner, am always mentioned in them. Far be

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it from me, who am what is called a Protestant —although, Heaven knows, I protest against nothing but selfishness and lying and idleness and vice—to speak slightingly of those innumerable fellow-Christians that value highly a multitudinous advocacy forbidden to myself. But far above the advocacy of holiest men and sainted martyrs and glorified women do I value the pleading simpleness, the powerful wrestling of these children, concerning whom the Brother of us all once said: 'Suffer these little ones to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

No influence can be brought to bear upon a child more healthful than the company of an aged, sensible, humorous, and undemonstratively pious woman. If a near relative be found, as in our imaginary case, to answer the character, so much the better; if not, such a character should be looked for in a nurse. But alas! your nurses now-a-days, like your poets, are all provokingly young. Euryclêa, when she nursed Ulysses, and Caiëta, when she nursed Æneas, were knowing old souls, well stricken in years; Homer was blind when he sang his songs divine; and Hesiod was white-bearded when he gave sage rhythmic

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counsel to his foolish and knavish brother. A lassie of a nurse may serve well enough for many purposes, where strength and activity are required; but there are some good old women that have a special faculty for managing children, that are imbued with a peculiar child-lore, such as can be found in no book, but seems to have been handed down, like the mystery of us Freemasons, by secret but oral tradition.

Something of such a character was a humorous creature, who for years was nurse in a family of my acquaintance. One of her methods of reproof was peculiar to herself, and could only have entered the brain of one wisely conversant with child-nature. Her youngest charge was a little girl, named Barbara, whose cast-off clothes and broken dolls were given from time to time to nurse's niece, ragged, plebeian, but bonny Lilly Pye. Lady Bab would now and then, of course, be naughty and disobedient. On these occasions nurse would bring down from a cupboard a ponderous old volume of the History of the War, would open it solemnly, and, putting on her spectacles, would gravely turn the pages as she read the future life and adventures of Lilly Pye. And Bab would be driven half out of her

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little wits to hear that Lilly Pye was to grow to be a great lady, and to ride in a carriage and six with outriders, and to marry the Marquis of Sugarpopoli, and to dine at eight o'clock in the evening, with men-servants in velvet liveries, and silver candlesticks on the table and the side-board, and chandeliers of shining glass hanging from the ceiling, and in them all wax-candles lighted, exactly like Jerusalem ; and that she was to send all her old clothes, and all she didn't want to eat, to poor, naughty, disobedient, nursery-maid Bab ! However, in course of time, the latter learnt to read, and the old tome was found to contain no Sibylline leaves ; and Lilly Pye continued to lead a kitchen life, which life she is leading to this day. Heaven knows ! the pumpkin coach may somewhere be in waiting, and the Cinderella may yet be Marchioness of Sugarpopoli ; so Barbara, although she is now in her early teens, had better keep a sharp look-out, and mind her book, and be good and obedient.

And now for a review of our scanty library ; or rather, let us diverge from a special case to the general consideration of child-literature and child-amusement.

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A man of fifty, of good natural abilities, who has had his fair share of mental work, and seen his fair share of the world, is a resultant of the whole history of mankind. Into his life have been compressed all the phases of human civilisation. He may review the several epochs of his life, and from them form conjectures of man's mental history; as one may read in upturned stone strata the physical history of the earth from now to the reign of Trilobites. Some of the most serious blunders in the training of children and youths arise from the non-observance of mental epochs. We endeavour to anticipate enlightenment, to hurry on civilisation. Too often do we gather a little forced fruit in an unnaturally early autumn from a tree that would bear a hundredfold, if we were only patient and believing. 'They also serve who only stand and wait.'

It is a very common, and often not an unfounded complaint on the part of a fond mother, that her boy is mentally overtasked. She dreads, reasonably, the combined effects of a brain overwrought and a physical frame rapidly developing. But it seldom strikes a mother that there is far more of danger, physical and moral, to be

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apprehended from unreasonably stimulating and developing the sentimental and spiritual portion of her child's nature. Such as have had great experience in public school life will agree with me that, as a class, the sons of clergymen are peculiarly hard to manage. Boys may have too much of tracts, hymns, catechisms, collects, and epistles ; may be drenched with good advice, surfeited with orthodoxy. They may take their pie and pudding before dinner, and have no stomach afterwards for meat and potatoes. They may be operated on with superlatives, until you have nothing stronger to fall back upon. They may have maxims of conduct set before them that they fail to comprehend, or intuitively disbelieve, or that experience will prove to be false or inopportune ; and their ears may be made more than usually deaf to precept and counsel. It is as easy to clog the spirit of a child with sentiment as to burden his little stomach with Scotch bun ; as easy, but fraught with far more serious consequences. We may bring on a spiritual indigestion that will defy all the pills and powders in the ecclesiastical pharmacopœia.

The subjects of Death and the mysteries of Judgment are too often forced prematurely on

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the notice of children. The too probable results of such folly will be fear of the dark, and nightmare dreams. Without any teaching on our part, the terrible reality of Death is appreciated at a very early age by children. I have known a very young child, who was supposed never to have heard the word, stop at the entrance of a museum of stuffed animals, and request his nurse to keep back a little companion, for fear the latter should be terrified by the spectacle of things dead. Some nursery pet goes the way of all living, and there is a sobbing over a kitten that the fire cannot warm; or some blank more serious is made in the family circle, and the child is led into a darkened room, and sees a familiar face clothed in a strange stillness and darkness and unutterable majesty; and ere long, upon a Sunday afternoon, when the birds are singing and the sun is shining, he is taken for a walk, and shown a little spot of sorrow-consecrated green grass; and thus the lesson is taught by circumstance, and needs alas! little of verbal enforcement; is taught too effectually, and too soon.

It is not impossible, nor indeed improbable, but that the religion of a child may differ greatly

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from that of a grown boy, and differ very greatly indeed from that of a grown man. Children, however, are too often approached upon the subject, as though they were capable of the feelings of an after age. No nursery child can appreciate the thrilling delight of the lad that has kept his wickets for an hour against hard bowling on a sunny afternoon ; no schoolboy can realize for a moment the ecstasy of silly talk between moony lovers in shady lane or on sandy beach ; and moony lovers cannot fathom the deep and still happiness of those who, at the close of a busy and an useful day, beguile the evening hours with book and needlework, or laughingly discuss the sayings and the doings—uninteresting to other ears—of the children who are just gone to bed. The religion of such happy parents must partake of love and charity and thankfulness and a trembling ripple of ineffably sweet fear, which may be dimly appreciated by the lovers, but will be wholly inappreciable by the romping boy and the prattling child. And yet, from their varied standpoints, child and boy and lover and parent may be equally religious, and the varied heart-worship of them all may be equally acceptable in the eyes of the All-discerning.

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When little children were brought to the Saviour, He laid his hand upon them, and blessed them; but He gave them no words of exhortation or instruction. How well were it if earthly teachers would imitate occasionally this reticence divine! Children of all ranks suffer much from the kindly but mistaken zeal of piously disposed people; but it is in our intercourse with the children of the poor that the effects of inopportune piety are most lamentably visible. Grouped in their little Sunday-school squadrons, they are exposed by the hour together to the platoon firing of genteel lavender-gloved curates, evangelical old maids, and surplice-bound curate-loving young ladies. The children of the wealthier classes are supposed to derive amusement and instruction from toys, puzzles, pictured and profane books, out-of-door games, and easy unrestrained lay-converse with their elders; but, whensoever we come in contact with the children of poor people, we lay at once didactic hands upon the poor things, and open wide their little beaks, and pour down doses of excellent but incomprehensible and nasty-tasting advice; or we put on the Sunday stop, and set them piping away some doggrel travesty of a

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beautiful but exclusively Hebrew lyric of King David.

I remember on one occasion hearing a very worthy, well-meaning, and sincerely pious man conduct morning worship for a posse of boys and children. He began word for word as follows: 'We do not presume, O Lord, to approach Thee from any confidence in our own merits; we acknowledge that we are miserable sinners; polluted beings; filthy rags; and that it is only of Thy restraining mercy that we are not swept away from off the theatre of Time with the besom of Destruction.' Fortunately, on the said occasion, not a single child or boy was paying any serious heed to this funereal service. I wonder how a congregation of rats would pray to a terrier, supposing they had been made by the terrier, and put into a rat-pit by the same for merriment? or how a swarm of earwigs would address an elephant, supposing that elephant had created them, and put them down upon his garden-walk, to pestle-and-mortar them with his unwieldy club-feet? Imagine how distressing it would be to an earthly father, if his baby-boy were incessantly entreating him with tears and groans not to bury him in the coal-hole or boil

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him in the kitchen-copper! If a cheerful frankness, an affectionate confidence on the part of a child is pleasing to a father here, can it be supposed as unpleasing to the All-beneficent Father of us all?

It would be impossible fully to realize the condition of mind in which, between the ages of three and five, a child listens to or peruses the stories of Mother Hubbard and her Dog; of Cock Robin; Mother Trot; Dame Bunch; The Three Bears; The Three Pigs; Little Red Riding Hood; Jack and the Bean-stalk; Cinderella and the Fairy Prince; Fatima and Bluebeard; and other masterpieces of child-literature. But we may in fancy approach that mental condition by a gradual process of elimination. We must remember what an almost *rasa tabula* is the mind of a child. His imagination is unfettered by restraining knowledge, and travels with electric speed. A simile is to his rapid apprehension as forcible as is a metaphor to us; and a metaphor to him is a sculptured out-standing reality. The idle impossibilities of Space and Time are as nothing to his limitless faith and catholic credulity. His geography embraces only the house he lives in and his ordinary walks.

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He may have heard of London, and formed the conception of innumerable toy-shops and never-ending bazaars; but its whereabouts is as indefinite as the position of the moon, and may be reached, for all he knows or cares, by railway, balloon, or kite. The morning and the evening sun are almost his boundaries of chronology. To-day is his little raft of time, on which he sails contentedly and fearlessly in the great ocean of eternity, with an invisible but unerring compass of faith. He knows nothing of the infinite past, dreads nothing in the infinite future. Incidents in his story-books that to grown-up readers seem comical or extravagant are to him commonplace and matter-of-fact. It is not in the least degree improbable to him that a doggie should be stone-dead at page five and nursing the cat over leaf. What is there of absurd in the idea of an old witch flying on a broom-stick? Why, witches have done it from time immemorial. Is not the circumstance pictured in shop windows? is it not written in books? It is not impossible but that this non-wonderment of children is more philosophical than the blatant amazement of moralizing philosophers. The child is not startled at the infinite variety of

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form around him. Perhaps he discerns intuitively that finity of shape and circumstance would be infinitely more marvellous and inexplicable than infinity. He sees a bird flying in the air, and a fish swimming in the water, but needs no pseudo-interpreter to explain to him the adaptation of the birdie's wing or the fish's fin and tail. He has not lived long enough to suspect that a creature could possibly be endowed with organs fitted for its own discomfort or destruction; as would seem to be the notion of those wiseacres who open wide mouths to tell us how well-fitted is the swallow for flying, and the mole for burrowing in the ground—an occupation not confined to moles.

Again, a child's ideas of physical pain are exceedingly limited; of mental sorrow are almost *nil.* What fun it is when the credulous giant sticks a bread-knife into his tremendous stomach, and falls down dead beneath the table into a heap of spilt porridge! And here we may as well draw attention to an æsthetic law in the construction of child-stories. Your good looks, virtues, and rewards should be bestowed upon little boys and girls, dogs, cats, piggywigs, donkeys, monkeys, pigeons, Poll-parrots, cock-

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robins, and such creatures as the little reader may be familiarly conversant withal. He will be thus imperceptibly drinking in through his imagination a love for, and a belief in, all around him. On the contrary, your uglinesses, vices, stupidities, and punishments must be shared amongst giants, foxes, wolves, and weasels, and such creatures as are not likely to make a personal visit to the nursery. These unhappy creatures will be the unconscious scapegoats of iniquity, and will carry away into the wilderness of Nowhere cunning and greediness and cruelty, and leave behind them the familiar shape of dog and cat and piggywig clothed with all that is good and kind and funny and lovable in humanity. There is one melancholy exception to this rule of æsthetic benevolence in the story of Cock Robin. The familiar little brown birdie that pecks up crumbs in our streets should have been invested with some endearing and homely quality, and a vice might have been more safely settled on the shoulders of the robin, as a rare visitant—and, by-the-by, a most quarrelsome tike of a bird. But the sparrow, poor birdikin, is a proof that a name is a reality; he is the victim of sound, and owes

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a perpetual infamy to the inexorable requirements of rhyme.

In all the old specimens of nursery nonsense above alluded to we have either good jingling sound, or the thread of a story reasonable in its unreasonableness. Certain vapid publications have recently made inroads amongst us, where size and gorgeousness of illustration endeavour vainly to compensate for poverty of fancy and sterility of wit in the letterpress. The composition of their no-story stories would have disgraced a nurserymaid in her novitiate. It is as easy to be dull and flat and insipid in addressing children as in addressing one's grown-up fellow-Christians from a pulpit.

When the epoch of pleasant balderdash is drawing to a close, the season for fable-reading will be drawing near. And here I would strongly recommend the purchase of a book of fables illustrated by Tenniel, as being a marvel of cheapness and goodness. The book has but one fault, and that is common to all of its kind; in other words, an explanatory moral is appended to each story. It would seem to me that a fable were worth nothing unless it carried its moral on the face of it. It would, perhaps, be as well that

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a child should read a fable again and again as an ordinary undidactic story. The moral would be enforced all the better if it came gradually upon his intelligence; and in many cases the lesson would be mentally grasped without ever having passed into a definite form of words.

Illustrated books of natural history might now be introduced, and that excellent German book of pictured arithmetic by whose admirably arranged illustrations a child is led to count without perceptible effort. Meanwhile, let us suppose that a daily lesson is being given in reading and spelling. To carry on fun side by side with instruction, let us be throwing in from time to time book after book, until we have exhausted all the volumes illustrated by Bennett, Cruickshank, Tenniel, and Weir.

Meanwhile, the intelligence of our little charge will have expanded, and we may with safety entrust him with serious and sacred reading. My own beau-ideal of a child's Bible would be a large copy of the four Gospels only, interleaved with photographs from every picture of note illustrative of the sacred life. I think the imaginary publisher, referred to on a previous page, would be conferring an inestimable boon upon

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our children, if he would but endeavour to make a probable fortune by collecting photographic copies of all the higher-class scripture-paintings in the great galleries of Europe. The study of such a Testament as I refer to would not be confined to Sundays. The teaching of its inexhaustible wisdom would be spread over the whole week. Conscious delight would be the companion of unconscious instruction. I would make, of course, this distinction in its perusal, that I would reserve it until the last evening hour, and would remove all other books before its pages were opened, and would read from time to time a simple parable, abstaining sacredly from all explanatory remark, and allowing the simple words to have their natural effect upon the little hearer's understanding.

Between the ages of six and nine instruction—that is to say, sedentary and regular instruction—should be limited to reading aloud, writing, and the earliest rules of arithmetic, and, during the last year, short daily exercises in dictation. But meanwhile the little intellect may be educated in a hundred ways. We have no right as yet to throw the mind back upon itself. Our teaching must as yet be objective in all things; never

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subjective, never introspective. We have no right to introduce the considerations of generalities or abstracts. The science of grammar is not yet due.

If a foreign language be now taught at all, it had far better be taught orally and without rules. It will be taken in without perceptible effort. I have known a child between three and five speak English and Gaelic, without being aware that she was a linguist. She never spoke Gaelic to her kindred, or English to her nurse. I am inclined, however, to think that the acquisition was a perilous, or, at all events, not a very usefully intellectual one. Our own language, in all the variety and versatility of its idiom, should first be grasped and unconsciously wielded, before a foreign intrusion is permitted. With a grown boy the science of grammar may be safely and usefully employed as a logical strengthener of the understanding; but mere linguistic quickness and loquacity may be left to the generality of parrots and couriers and a few exceptional cases amongst our embassy-attachés.

Our teaching should as yet, I repeat, be objective; and no effort should be spared to make it entertaining. At the same time, we have no

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right to be always teaching. We may so attempt to improve many occasions as to spoil all. Men and women can claim the right of occasional or exceptional relaxation; but children are bound only to occasional or exceptional work. We may, however, cheat them with a fond and pardonable guile. We may read to them the story of Robinson Crusoe, and awaken their curiosity regarding far distant lands and sail-traversed seas. We may read the pilgrimage of Christian, and throw a dimly defined solemnity into their ideas of human life. We may visit a menagerie with them, and make them familiar with the shapes and habits of its varied and beautiful prisoners. We may walk with them on the sea-shore, and gather pebbles and shells, and observe the curious forms of sea-beach life. We may ramble through lanes and woods at all seasons of the year, and note with them when the cuckoo comes and the swallow goes away; how the beech comes early into his spring-dress of green, and the oak puts on reluctantly his autumn suit of brown. We may profitably visit a farmer friend, and discourse with his labouring-men, and hear secrets about wheat and oats and turnips. We may wander occasionally in amongst ship-

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ping at some port-town, and see the various builds of ships that come from Italy and Dutchland and America; and we may hereby show what a wonderful brotherhood is mankind—how that one man sows in one hemisphere for his brother to reap in the other; and on a globe or map we may now point out with a finger the sea-tracks of tea and almonds and raisins and figs and oranges, as they journey from their native lands to our cupboards and dessert-plates. And meanwhile we shall have awakened a curiosity in the mind of our little one regarding the dwellers in these far-off lands. To gratify and utilize this curiosity, we should be disposed to purchase books of travel and coloured illustrations of costumes. But all the while we should be careful to use no vilifying term in respect to any large section of humanity, for fear of awakening in our hearer's breast the feeling of conceit and self-sufficiency. While we should be doing our utmost to train him according to the simplicity of Christ's teaching, employing for that purpose the Teacher's own golden words, and as little as possible of human pinchbeck, we should be afraid to put limits to his ideas of God's goodness, by speaking of any people, however black their

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faces, as lost sheep and wanderers in an outer darkness. Above all, we should be very careful indeed never to speak a disparaging word of any denomination of Christian brethren; we should give him as little as possible of metaphysico-doctrinal teaching; we should endeavour to stave off as long as possible the days—which, with life prolonged, will come inevitably—when it will dawn upon him, and gradually become painfully distinct and palpable, how cordially we Christians do hate one another.

Many of the suggestions here made regarding amusements, toys, reading, and instruction, would seem to be practicable only in the case of children whose parents were, at all events, in comfortable circumstances. But why should not infant-schools, attended by children of the poor, be abundantly supplied with toys and pictured books? A great number of useless and unedifying print might be removed to make room for the opportune and absorbing stories of Red Riding Hood and Cock Robin. There are scattered up and down the country a vast number of ladies, old and young, sowing seed in gravel; there are, especially in the green sister-island, many well-intentioned ecclesiastics disseminat-

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ing social and political diarrhœa, by turning, turning, turning their discordant barrel-organs of polemical strife. If these all would relinquish their engrossing but sometimes mischievous and at all times unprofitable occupations, and go, as colporteuses and colporteurs, from poor district to poor district, with parcels of wooden boxes laden with toy-treasures, and bales of pictured books replete with exhilarating and healthy bag-wash, then would the dear ladies, young and old, be engaged in a way suited to the kindness of their hearts, and many of the polemical ecclesiastics would be occupied in a missionary enterprise congenial to their understandings.

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X.

GIRLHOOD, WOMANHOOD, AND HOME.

I AM standing upon the edge of my present subject, shivering. After taking the plunge, I wonder whether I shall ever rise to the surface again, or whether I shall be pulled in by the hair to shore. However, it is of no use to stand and catch one's death of cold, so . . . . . (*splash*) . . . . . .

The case stands simply thus. The subject-matter of many of my chapters has been drawn, to a great extent, from personal observation and experience. For the immediately ensuing few pages I must trust to the perilous guidance of divination. I was previously expending only interest, and am now proceeding to draw upon my capital. From early boyhood to early manhood my days were passed in monastic seclusion,

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and it is only within the last eight or nine years that my eyes have been opened to the value of feminine society and companionship. I remember reading, somewhere in the pages of Dugald Stewart, that a man will probably judge more accurately of the quality of a wine and the merits of a picture, if he be neither familiarized with the wine in question, nor given to dabble in amateur painting. If inexperience be requisite to ensure impartiality, I feel myself admirably adapted to give counsel on the difficult question of feminine education.

We are all agreed that, during childhood, the studies of both sexes should be identical. It is usually at about the age of seven that boys and girls are set upon separate roads that, at every step taken, diverge more and more from one another. Indeed, we may take a capital Y to represent the educational routes of the two sexes. For a while, boys and girls proceed side by side along the stem—only that the stem should be a thin one—until they reach the point of bifurcation, at which, intellectually speaking, they part company for ever—the boys taking the wide path, and the girls the thin upstroke. But whereas, in days of remote antiquity, boys and

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girls, after thus separating, went in diametrically opposite directions, with their backs, as it were, turned on one another, in these our own days we are disposed to lessen more and more the angle of divergence, and are hopeful that the time is not very far distant when that angle will be zero, or an angle of inappreciable magnitude.

At present it would appear that girls are educated on two plans—the homely and the ornamental. A girl may never quit the parental hearth, and may owe her limited mental development partly to the instruction of a governess, and mainly to what she casually hears or desultorily reads. She will, however, in all probability arrive at proficiency in all the practical mysteries of housewifery that conduce so much to neatness, comfort, and economy. Or a girl may pass a term of years laying in a stock of artificial accomplishments, with her attention fixed upon an ideal drawing-room in the future, wherein, with wax-flowers here, crochet-work there, and pretty articles of inutility everywhere, she will, day after day, and evening after evening, entertain or be entertained, bore or be bored, with a delicate minced-meat of conversation, or the meaningless brilliancies of pianoforte bagatelles.

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The zenith of either method of training can only be arrived at in matrimony, into which estate a pupil trained upon the former plan will enter for a life of busy, useful, but unrefining drudgery, and one trained upon the latter for a life of factitious enjoyment and purposeless display.

For the education of a boy the one great requisite is held to be a Latin grammar, and for that of a girl a piano. In the first case, three reasons may be given for the thing required. The boy must either be puzzled and bullied, because his father was so treated before him; or he must have a difficult and impracticable task set him to keep him out of peril and mischief; or *he must have his reasoning powers educed, cultivated, and strengthened.* In the other case, a girl must in due time do something to amuse guests in the parental home before marriage, and in her own home afterwards.

Let us take the third and most sensible reason for connecting boy-training with the inevitable grammar. Are girls endowed with reasoning faculties? or is reason a something that belongs exclusively to males, as manes to lions, and combs to cocks? And, furthermore, are the graces of society to be cultivated only by our

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women-folk? If music be their perquisite, or rather their special burthen, why should not dancing—after Turk fashion—be thrown in, to boot? Would it not be a great saving of trouble to us men to be allowed our chibouques and our siesta, as we gazed upon wives and daughters and nieces and sisters pirouetting and capering and swanning before us? But, after all, it is more than probable that logic and grace are both of them of the common gender; that a woman is not unsexed by the exercise of her thinking faculties, and that a man is bound in all fairness to contribute his quota to the amusement-fund of general society.

Antiquity tells us a mournful tale concerning womankind; and barbarism, wherever penetrated, confirms the dismal record. Nay; this very confirmation is confirmed by what we see in the midst of our own supposed civilisation. Chivalry is said to have raised woman to a pedestal of honour. As far as I can read the riddle of mediæval chivalric thought, I can see, indeed, that the worship of the Virgin Mother invested womanhood with a sanctity never known or conceived before; but that feeling would appear, beyond the precincts of

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conventual life, to have been speedily, and almost universally, limited and vulgarized by the war-loving and rank-respecting instincts of the times. In all old pleasant stories our heroines are invariably, or almost invariably, young and beautiful. The interest of these stories usually hinges upon the fact that their chastity is for a while in extreme peril; which circumstance of itself pleads powerfully against the theory of contemporaneous male virtue. They may through the opening pages of a romance be disguised in poor habiliments, and occupied in menial services; but in the sequel they are discovered, to our exceeding comfort, to be the nieces or daughters of exiled lords or murdered monarchs. In even democratic communities of ancient Hellas they carried aristocratic predilections to a further length; and a youth who might figure as a drudge and a bastard at the beginning of a play would be raised, in the last act, to filial relationship with some immortal but amorous occupant of Olympus. Chivalry did much to raise the social rank of womanhood; but chivalry only went a certain way in the right direction. It was left for reason to complete the work begun by sentiment, or point the way

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towards its completion; for democracy to improve upon the vague and partial theories of feudalism. It is to the New World that we are indebted for the sensible but unromantic doctrine of woman's equality with man; of equality under all circumstances and through all ages, as contrasted with her divinity in youth, drudgery in maturity, and obliteration in age. In other words, our modern theories would inculcate upon men the duty of regarding women as their companions and friends, instead of petting them with an affectionate condescension, a tender pity, or a thinly-disguised contempt; the propriety, in short, of viewing them as complements under all varieties of time and incident, and not as supplements simply indoors and domestic.

Let us follow, in imagination, two favourable specimens of our representative women through their matrimonial and maternal careers. The homely mother of the Martha-type will find it impossible to resist the stream of fashion, and will be constrained to give her daughters at least a sprinkling of the current accomplishments. She may show a bold front, and argue, with a pertinacious and half-incredulous good-humour, in favour of primitive simplicity; but the heart

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within her will dilate with pride, and perhaps her eyes will fill with tears of pleasure, as a daughter prattles away idiomatically Anglican French to a distinguished foreigner, or screams a bewildering cantata to words as incomprehensible to the singer as to the innocent dam, or lets fall from the piano on to the carpet the trickling notes of the most fashionable and recently-published pianoforte cascade. Her ornamental *vis-a-vis* will take, with more or less of awkwardness and reluctance, to the fulfilment of petty household duties, and will grow to value less and less her once treasured linguistic and musical accomplishments, as she discovers the advantages of unaffected talk over the repetition of vapid set phrases, or begins to be almost as heartily tired of her show musical pieces as her husband or her husband's friends.

In either case we should have a wife to whom the brain of a highly-educated husband would be as a sealed book; a wife that would be unable or unwilling to discuss with her partner any problem of social, political, or religious interest; to follow the course of his reading or his speculations; to walk side by side with him beyond the narrow circle of domestic and personal in-

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terests. In either case we should have a mother unqualified to carry out the mental training of a daughter, and unable even dimly to appreciate the mental condition of an intelligent and well-read son ; one who, if such a son were discussing broadly and generously a question of difficulty, would look on him with fear and wonderment, like a hen upon a foster duckling, as it were venturing upon a, to her, untraversed alien pond.

And here I may not inappropriately refer to an institution in feminine educational systems, whether homely or ornamental, which happily has never as yet obtained a footing in systems of male training ; and that is, the formal recognition of *finishing classes.* At a certain age or at a certain epoch in mental progress, a girl is introduced to *finishing governesses* and *finishing masters.* From the hands of these petty omniscients she is supposed to issue absolutely perfect ; *tota, teres, atque rotunda ;* a new edition of Eve as she came from the ribs of her husband and the hands of her Maker. It is, perhaps, from a faith in this creed of optimist and *ne-plus-ultrà* training that intellectual pursuits so little engage the attention of our grown womanhood. They may reason unconsciously with themselves that

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such as in youth have rounded the circle of attainable knowledge may be allowed in maturer years to relax wearied brains with the trifles of light literature and the sensuous excitement of novel-reading. But alas! this circle of knowledge can be rounded by neither sex, by no age, no ability, no industry, no genius. The first school-bench on which we sit is our mother's or our nurse's knee. Children and age with all the intervening epochs are but rising forms in our common school-curriculum. At length the day arrives when there is astonishment, and perhaps sorrow, in the chamber where our old school-garments are found lying; and some comrades will suppose that we have absconded, and others that we have gone home for the vacation; and a pious few will feel assured that we have been called to receive the real finishing lessons from the lips of the Great Teacher.

The goal to which all a girl's thoughts are directed, from childhood upwards, is matrimony. In every tale she reads the heroine is followed by her with absorbing interest, as she pursues a tortuous pathway through two entire volumes and three-quarters of a third to a Rosamond's bower, in which is standing a clergyman in a

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surplice. Now surely, in the name of all that is logical, if wedlock is thus to pre-occupy all the thoughts of girlhood, it should be kept as carefully before the mind of boyhood as the goal of all ultimate endeavour, seeing that wedlock is a condition that affects one sex as much as the other. At all events, a woman can never be married, but, from the necessities of the case, a man must be married at the same moment. And yet we should regard with unqualified and merited contempt a wretch that should maunder through a sentimental youth into manhood, wasting his thoughts and energies upon mawkish anticipations of connubial bliss. We feel intuitively that a man should pursue some definite useful career, independently of all connected with marriage ; that he should take in due time the wife that God may throw in his way ; but that until that day, and ever after it, he can only win respect of himself and his fellows by the prosecution of a fixed and honest calling. Why, then, should the world of usefulness be closed against feminine aspirations ? Why should all chance of independence be denied ? Why should the happiness of half humanity be staked upon what, in seven cases out of ten, is a

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matter of utterest contingency? Why should a man be allowed to push his way to fortune, and a woman be compelled to wait until she be pulled into it? It would seem as though we had two separate creeds for the two sexes, and believed in freedom of the will for man, and in fatalism for woman. There is an extremely beautiful fairy tale, exquisitely handled by our poet-laureate, of a sleeping princess awakened by the true lover's kiss. The story is thus far true in its suggestions, that warm and reciprocated love throws a superlative charm into the life of man or woman; but it is false if it suggest that woman has no duties or responsibilities of weight anterior to wedlock, and no subsequent duties and responsibilities disconnected with her new condition.

The most effectual remedy for the present unreasonable relationship of the two sexes to one another would be to improve the education of both boys and girls, and assimilate the now diverse systems to one another. There are certain mechanical operations, such as sewing and the like, that might be left in *statu quo;* but even in regard to them we must remember that there is nothing in them necessarily feminine, as many

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of our trades would indicate, and also that their simplification by machinery will probably proceed during the next generation at a very rapid rate. There are certain boyish sports that would overtax a girl's strength; but a girl requires sport of some kind as much as a boy, and the present melancholy limitation of her pastimes is due to our mischievous and superstitious worship of spurious gentility. Our girls are trained to ladyhood, not womanhood; for an artificial life within parlour walls, rather than for a natural life of open-air, generous, and catholic habits and aims. But, whilst the amusements of boys and girls should differ in degree rather than in kind, —should be, in fact, only modifications of one another adapted to differences in physical powers, —it is difficult to conceive a single sound argument that could be adduced to justify any material divergence in exclusively mental studies; at all events, in such studies as are followed with objects purely educatory and preparative. The study of Latin is said with truth to lead to accuracy of thought and perspicuity of expression. The same might be said of the exhaustively analytical study of even a fractional part of a master-work in any

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language. But accuracy of thought and perspicuity of expression are as requisite for women as for men. The elementary study of mathematical science leads to mental habits of close and exact reasoning. Many of our social anomalies are connected with the melancholy fact, that the great majority of women never reason at all; nay, actually pride themselves on following impulse and intuition. The study of the ancient poets is said to refine and elevate. The same might be said regarding the study of all modern poetry of surpassing excellence. No one for a moment would venture to assert that refinement and elevation of sentiment were incompatible with the most graceful and delicate type of womanhood. A smattering of French or of Italian, acquired simply for carrying on, at contingent and distant intervals, an artificial, insincere, and unspontaneous conversation, is almost as useless to a human being as it would be to a quadruped. To sketch, and sing, and play, for such as are not obviously destitute of taste and faculty for one or all, are sexless accomplishments, although at present we hear little of them in our boys' schools. Whilst we should pray that their influence might be shed impartially

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on feminine boarding-schools and boy grammar-schools, we would pray with equal fervour that a considerable number of accomplishments of the wax-flower species might in course of time be dispensed with altogether and everywhere, and removed to make way for healthier or more improving occupations. In general terms, we would advocate such modifications on either side as might conduce to tone down the rudeness and brutality now too characteristic of our manhood, and raise the great mass of our womenfolk from pretty sillinesses, affected minauderies, love of display, and covetousness of passing and worthless admiration, to the cultivation of such tastes and the prosecution of such studies as, without detracting from grace and elegance, would increase their self-respect, and multiply manifold their powers of domestic and public utility.

If the education of the young of both sexes were assimilated to the full extent of our advocacy, it would soon cease to be regarded as a necessity that boys and girls should hold so much aloof from each other. As it is, little boys and girls, while clad in almost similar habiliments, say good-bye to each other outside

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the doorways of their nurseries, and after long years of heterogeneous pursuits, meet together as strangers on the threshold of mature life. Is there any reason in nature for this long estrangement?

Under present circumstances, it would be utopian absurdity to advocate the consociation of boys and girls in school-studies. It may not, however, be unprofitable to suggest its ultimate, at least partial, feasibility. So long as the subject-matter of our instruction is studiously made dry and wearisome, and our methods of stimulating to exertion, enforcing attention, and inculcating theories are more or less tinged with brutality, it would be premature and inopportune to remove girls from the tranquil insipidity of a nursery to the boisterous vulgarity of a boys' schoolroom. So long also as our universities are open to youthful idlers of unlimited wealth and foolishly and wickedly worshipped rank, so long as our colleges continue to be—to ever so slight an extent—young gentlemen's clubs, it would be unpardonable rashness and folly to trust our youthful womanhood within their precincts as students. But, if a college or an university were modified into a

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bonâ fide place of mental instruction, what possible objection could be made to the matriculation of students, resident or non-resident, of both sexes? We see no impropriety in men and women going together to the theatre; to the opera; to a popular lecture on subjects scientific, literary, æsthetic; or to the house of God. Where would be the impropriety in youthful students of the two sexes attending together systematic courses of instruction in subjects of sound, useful, practical, secular knowledge, or in contending together as candidates in academic examination-rooms? Let us bear in mind this important fact, that *the education of at least half our population already rests in the hands of women,* and that—with the exception of the Ladies' College and the College of Preceptors in London, and the recently founded Alexandra College in Dublin,—no efforts are made on a great or adequate scale to provide high instruction to youthful womanhood, or furnish to the public trustworthy guarantees of the capacities of lady-teachers. The melancholy fact is that our whole educational system is in a chaotic state. In the teaching, however, of one sex we have made, and are making, efforts to bring

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order out of confusion; but in the teaching of the other we have been, and are still, shamefully, stupidly, and barbarously remiss. And we are paying dearly for our remissness. Our womenfolk exact a terrible but wholly unconscious vengeance of us for our stupidity, negligence, or tyranny. They may not interfere with us in matters commercial or political, but in things social and religious they, in all the sincerity of undeveloped intellectualism, hold us tight bound within the limits of foolish conventionalities and anachronous superstitions. They make hypocrites of many of us, and fools of nearly all. We—the men—are not the gainers by this treatment; and, of course, the women are very much the losers.

To me it would appear that the world is a place of work; that an idler is the chief of sinners; and that happiness and virtue lie in action, when action has for object the increase of the sum total of human happiness, knowledge, and virtue. To exclude one-half of mankind from the theatre of virtuous activity, and confine it within a waiting-room of expectancy or a prison of inertia would seem to be cruel, wicked, and stupid in the extreme. The

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ancient Church of Christendom—from which I and the majority of my readers are dissenters, and the practical wisdom of which we are too prone to disparage—honours the rite of matrimony with the holy title of 'Sacrament.' But, while it sanctifies the social estate, it ennobles and utilizes the isolated condition of maidenhood. In the city of my present abode are many convents, one of which alone—that of the Sisters of Presentation—half supports and entirely instructs three hundred little ragged children. These excellent women are not singular in this poor distracted Catholic country in their benevolence and wisdom. Their instruction is not limited to things sacred, but they hallow by their administration the teaching of secular elements. In Protestant lands it is not unusual for the female relations of squires, rectors, vicars, and curates, to take a part—and, I doubt not, to some extent an useful part—in Sunday-school teaching. But the rough week-day work is left altogether to unhonoured and poorly-paid hireling instructors. I am far from advocating a diminution of the already scanty payments of these latter, but I could wish some self-sacrifice and self-devotion shown, in a plain

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and practical way, by well-born, cultivated, refined, and wealthy women, whose talents and energies were not fully occupied in the management of their own families, or of the families of their nearest kindred. Wherever I go, I see women of ability and goodness passing lives of utterest listlessness and inutility in the midst of ignorance more or less profound, and I am impressed to the heart that the noblest of all occupations is the enlightenment of ignorance; that such is a higher—perhaps only a little higher—occupation than the alleviation of physical misery. Indeed, I have many times called to mind a sacred parable, when I have seen women of good parts, intellectual and spiritual, standing aloof, in maidenhood, from the business of the outer world. I have thought that a Divine Teacher would say to them: 'Wherefore stand ye all the day idle?'—and that, if their answer were: 'Because *no man* hath hired us;' He would say: 'Go ye also into MY vineyard;' and that going they would receive, every one of them, a penny.

Among the children of our poor lies, partly, the sphere of woman's activity for the coming century. The harvest is great, and the labourers,

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we feel assured, will not be few or idle. But the experience of past times has taught us the salutary lesson, that we must not begin with our little ones at the wrong end, physically or mentally; that patience must be our rod, and the way of common-sense our method; that we must cultivate subordinate faculties with unremitting industry; and deal carefully—*and only with legitimate permission*—with faculties ultimate and spiritual. We must bow to the plain fact, that a ladder reaching to heaven must, to be useful, have its feet upon the ground; and that the safest way to spiritual excellence lies through physical health and mental strength. At the same time, we should be far from even suggesting that health of body and mind were alone sufficient for the perfect development of human excellence. We only speak of the effectuation of these conditions as a means towards an end, as an instrument for the completion of the greatest of all conceivable works—the elevation and improvement of our common humanity. We would use, in all modesty and humility, the room of secular training and instruction as the ante-chamber wherein to robe ourselves respectfully and decorously, ere we were ushered into the Presence.

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But, apart from the wide field of instructing our innumerable poor, there are many social problems whose solution can only be satisfactorily settled by woman's agency. Our marriage laws are fraught with perilous anomalies. We are all thoroughly conscious that an offence against nature is being committed when feminine youth, poverty, and beauty are united to age, decrepitude, wealth, and lechery; when hands are clasped in holy places symbolically of the unholy union of property with property; when the temporary concubine flaunts unabashed in our public places; and debased unwomanly women patrol our most multitudinous thoroughfares. The redress of all these evils, and of many more analogous ones, rests with the women-folk of the coming century. That they should be prepared for the great mission before them, it is absolutely necessary that a definite and systematic training should be gone through by them in childhood and girlhood. I do not for a moment suppose that the next generation is to experience a dearth of wives and mothers; but I do suppose and confidently believe that the next generation will behold multitudes of women impressed with the belief, and acting on the

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belief, that womanhood has duties beautiful as those of wifehood, holy as those of maternity.

In the face of facts, it is absurd or impertinent to state that woman is incapable of the work here supposedly set before her. In this very generation, the noblest example of self-devotion in the cause of physically suffering humanity has been set by Florence Nightingale. Among the foremost of English living writers stands Miss Braddon; the accursed institution of slavery was effectually undermined by one work of Mrs. Beecher Stowe; the philanthropy of Miss Carpenter is as affectionately appreciated in India as in Britain; and the monarch most honoured throughout the world, and the best-beloved by her own subjects, is a Queen.

However, there are many pious but timid souls that look upon the scheme of woman's interference in matters socio-political as a devout but chimerical imagination. They can see no practical method of adapting existing institutions to work harmoniously with novel theories; or are terrified out of all quiet reasoning by petty contemporaneous satire. In this case, as in all cases, where there is a will, there is a way. If the reader will turn to the thirty-third volume

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of *The Travels of Busbequius Bungfungus*, he will find the following remarkable and suggestive passage in a description of the beautiful but rarely-visited island of Alicubi. 'About a century ago :' says the great but little appreciated traveller : 'a social movement of a highly interesting character took place amongst this cultivated and virtuous people. It was originated by the then reigning queen, Nommoc Esnes, a woman who combined the gentlest virtues of her sex with masculine firmness and sagacity. After binding herself by a public declaration to be uninfluenced in her choice by considerations of metaphysics, doctrinal theology, party-politics, or lineage, but to have regard only to dignity of character, kindliness of heart, and practical good-sense, this monarch designated a lady as her colleague in what was afterwards named "*The Council of Honourable Women.*" This second designated, after a similar fashion, a third ; the third, a fourth ; and so on, until the number of a hundred was completed. The Council has never been allowed to over-pass this number. On state occasions its members take precedence of all others of their sex, without regard to age, wealth, or rank. No scandal has occurred to

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lower its character and lessen thereby its influence for good. It is, however, provided that a scandalous proceeding fully proved against any one member shall entail the immediate dissolution of the whole body, and that its re-inauguration shall rest with the lady of highest social position for the time being. The Council sits for a limited period once a year. Its functions are merely deliberative, and limited to the discussion of questions of purely domestic and social economy. It is only when a motion has received the assent of three-fourths of the entire body that it is submitted for consideration to the Supreme Legislative Assembly. Such a motion meets invariably with a deferential hearing, and, in the generality of instances, passes, in a more or less modified form, into law. It is almost impossible to conceive the amount of social benefit that has been already achieved by this simple but admirable institution. Happily there seems but little chance of its utility being ever diminished, as the method of ever-varying co-optation seems likely to ensure the society against stagnation or ossification in sentiment; the newest comer having under all ordinary circumstances the right of nomination to a vacant

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place. One hundred years ago the nobles and wealthy merchants of the island maintained numerous hareems, or lived a life of celibacy, at their pleasure; girls were throughout girlhood kept inactive, and fed on pease-porridge, to give them a premature but unwholesome plumpness, and passed weary years singing monotonous jingles to the music of the two-stringed tom-tom; a bride was led to the dwelling of her future lord with a rope around her neck and waist, and her hands bound fast behind her back; married women wore heavy ear-rings at all times, and grotesque nose-rings on festal days; the great majority of female infants were killed by exposure in the open streets; and aged and infirm women, so soon as they became the slightest burthen to their relatives, were buried alive in the public market-place. All these barbarous customs, together with many other analogous ones, have been abolished; and now, to all intents and purposes, the sexes are placed socially and politically upon an equal footing. The mental culture of the sexes is almost identical. In legislative affairs the women-folk, through the agency of their Council, have just as much of indirect unobtrusive influence as a prudent wife

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has—I regret to say, only occasionally,—in the commercial and political dealings of her husband in my own native England. I only wish:' continues the benevolent philosopher: 'that I could say of my native land what I can say of this happy island,—that you will never therein see a poor girl wholly untaught, or a rich one taught to no intelligible earthly purpose; that all employments, *not calling for the exercise of great physical strength*, are there open to both sexes indifferently; that it there brings almost as much of infamy on a man to cohabit with a mistress as to live without a wife.'

For my own part, I sympathize most heartily with the wise and benevolent philosopher, and I could wish to live to the age of Methuselah, were it only for the gratification of witnessing the inevitable new order of things, in which an idle man will be regarded as an unnatural monstrosity, and an idle woman as a creature singularly and unaccountably afflicted or diseased.

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XI.

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY.

TO keep a community of grown men sweet there should be a judicious distribution of cakes and ale. Voluntary asceticism may work well in occasional instances under very exceptional circumstances; but forced asceticism is the fruitful source of hypocrisy, cant, and vice. Among ancient nations there were some that worshipped the Sun of noonday, and some that worshipped the Moon of midnight. Were I a heathen at all, I would be a worshipper of the great fountain of colour, taste, perfume, motion, and life. Indeed, I am disposed to think that this great luminary was made by God to cheer and flood its satellite worlds with heat and warmth; although some insist that its radiance serves only to expose blunders in the Creator's workmanship, and its

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heat to breed maggots. There are fine rays of light invisible to our ken, and fine notes of insect-singers inaudible to our ears; the which in their plenitude produce great catholic effects, visible and audible. Even so, invisibly and inaudibly, do Amusement, Fun, Humour, Dancing, and Music operate in the building up of human Virtue. There is in their working no noise as of hammer; there is no speech nor language; but their voices are heard among them.

As a man struck by lightning may die from a momentary excess of vitality; as a nerve overcharged with pleasurable sensation may be a conductor of acute pain; so a man that usurps for himself too much of gratification may brutify his nature and deaden his capacity for enjoying what alone he holds to be enjoyable. The secret of real enjoyment lies in giving or sharing more than in taking. An air in music of which our ears have been long satiated becomes, as it were, born again as we play or sing it to fresh listeners. A painter paints his picture anew, and a musician re-writes his score, as spectators or auditors gaze wonder-stricken at the canvas or thrill with delight beneath voice and instrument. Whenever we are natural, and give our-

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selves fair-play, we act as lovers of our kind. A misanthropist should be pitied as a diseased thing. We should have hospitals erected for cantankerous people, and should treat them delicately as creatures suffering under some sort of maniacal delusion. An ugly face and a misshapen form may clothe, as they often clothe, sweetness of disposition. This sweetness may be fairly or charitably attributed entirely to its representative; but the ugliness and distortion are undoubtedly the outcomings of vice or stupidity, parental or progenitorial; or of Accident. And Accident is the Devil. The ancient Greeks would, on festal occasions, set a youth of faultless form upon a pedestal for general homage and wonderment. They were not far in the wrong. A vigorous and healthy and well-formed man or woman may be warped by adverse circumstance into evil ways; but the progenitors of either must, for the most part, have been cheerful and sober and virtuous souls. According to some modern philosophers, the progeny of a healthy baboon may in the course of cyclic periods emerge into manhood. The experience of ages has shown us that the progeny of vicious men pass on,

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physically, to annihilation through the condition of baboonhood.

'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die' is a motto as generally acted on as decried. It would, perhaps, be more unexceptionably worded thus: 'Let us eat and drink well, lest to-morrow we die;' and, forasmuch as to eat and drink to wholesome effect we should never feast alone, we might hold to the correlative precept: 'Let us give while our hands are open.' God knows; in a little while our hands will be folded across our breasts, and our ears will be deaf to the words of dissatisfaction or thankfulness. 'Live thou each day as though it were thy last' is a double-edged maxim. If taken in a spiritual sense, it may make us saints; if in a physical one, libertines; if in both senses, happy in ourselves and the cause of happiness to others. We have yet another motto, which is complementary to the two already quoted: 'Let us work while it is yet day; for the night cometh wherein no man can work.'

But, before our hands be turned to labour, it is necessary that our brains be cleared of cobwebs. It is true that, if we thoroughly love our neighbour, our love will be as subtle to influence his heart, as

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is quicksilver to permeate the tissues of his body. But in exact proportion to its efficacy as a motive power is love a perilous thing if ill-regulated. Many a criminal has swung on the gallows for less of permanent mischief done than has bought a good name and a good conscience for a tender-hearted philanthropist. There are several ways of well-doing wrongly. We may begin at the beginning, and leave off soon and abruptly ; or, we may begin at the middle or close to the end. A good motive may clear us before the eyes of Omniscience ; but, that it may be made to result in alien good, it must be deftly managed and rightly guided. As a steam-engine is to a car, so is the responsibility of a stoker to that of an ordinary driver. The sharper the chisel, the more harm it will do in the hands of a bungler. A reservoir of water should be as a store-house of blessings ; but, if it be insecurely happed in, it may deluge an underlying plain with ruin.

The philosophers of old, in Greece and India, had their *summum bonum,* or goal of action, as had the alchemists of mediæval days their stone of transmutation. The object of all endeavour would be variously defined as ' Happiness :' ' Enjoyment :' ' Wisdom :' ' Self-satisfaction :' ' Ab-

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sorption into Deity:' or 'Annihilation.' Any one of these definitions may be re-defined in a multiplicity of ways. I would venture in all humility to lay down a longer but less perplexing definition of the great duty of man, and, as a fundamental axiom, would assume it to be incumbent upon each one of us to exert himself at all times to the utmost to render himself physically healthy, strong, and cheerful,—mentally sound of judgment and well-informed,—morally just and self-controlling,—spiritually trustful in God's wisdom and goodness; to dispose himself to think and hope well of his neighbour; and only in his own case to be severely critical of action, opinion, or motive. It is very probable that my definition is as lacking in originality as in terseness. Be it, however, new or old, I hold it to be superior to the now fashionable precepts of right action, which I think might be fairly thus expressed: 'Heed not the corporeal or mental condition of your neighbour, but regard him only as a soul made temporarily and indirectly visible; cram your own spiritual nostrums, if possible, down his throat; if he swallow them, even with a wry face, well and good; if he spit them out, leave him to his damnable perversity, and fold your-

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self more than ever warmly in the mantle of self-satisfaction.'

Not one department in my own many-sided rule of right endeavour can be safely neglected. At present, however, we shall restrict our attention to one section of one department, and for the while ignore other necessarily co-existing divisions. Thus a mathematician in some problems forgets for a while the variability of certain variables, and a sportsman shuts one eye to take aim at a partridge who would use both eyes to gaze on a covey.

Our epoch has seen philanthropy and intelligence side by side engaged in providing against and mitigating disease. But we are not sufficiently alive to the great importance of cultivating habits conducive to physical strength; and we are lamentably forgetful or ignorant of the duty of disseminating innocent—and healthy if innocent—mirth and cheerfulness. As we have each of us our peck of dirt to eat involuntarily in life-time; so is there a countervailing peck of pleasure that every human being insists on swallowing. It were as useless to attempt depriving him of it altogether as to endeavour to extract the oxygen out of the air he breathes.

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All we can do for his own good and our own is by example, precept, and assistance, to induce, warn, and enable him to extend the eating of his peck over a whole life, instead of gulping down and bolting dog-fashion at intervals great snacks of the delicious but perilous food.

I was told many years ago, upon good authority, of the means adopted by a sensible clergyman of exterminating Sunday drunkenness in his parish; means, such as of late have been countenanced by the public utterances of leading Presbyterian divines in Scotland and of an eminent High-Church Bishop in England. This sensible, liberal-minded, cunningly righteous man started a cricket-club, which had its meetings on Sunday afternoons, in which meetings he himself took a prominent but not obtrusive or domineering part. In course of time his church was thronged upon a Sunday morning, and the tavern was empty during the afternoon. He had caught his congregation with a holy guile. I think it impossible to over-estimate the wisdom evinced in a procedure apparently so simple. To appreciate it to some extent adequately, let us reflect seriously but sadly upon the countless multitudes of kindly, pious,

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innocent people who, by a life-long well-intentioned hindrance of harmless pleasures, all unconsciously help to render more virulently keen in others the thirst for lawless or debasing gratifications. It requires only ordinary courage and principle to pluck folly and vice by the beard, but superlative dexterity and resolution must be united to cope successfully with the prejudices of respectability, kindliness, and virtue.

Desires and passions in the moral world, like force in the domain of physics, are indestructible. But a stream that cannot be dammed may be diverted in its course; and heat, if perilous or useless as heat, may be transmuted into harmless or useful motion. To seek to quench all pleasures because some at all times and all in excess are pernicious were as unreasonable as to fight against the sun's rays because at times they strike fatally, or at any time will singe us if concentrated in a burning-glass. 'Of what use to thee is thy pomp and glory and the multitude of thy riches? Canst thou carry them with thee to thy grave?' says the Seneca-school of flatulent morality. The same might be said of a good dinner. We cannot, if we wished it, carry a curry within us

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to the year's end. But, for all that, a curry is a pleasant thing when well made. To learn to die is a necessary but difficult lesson, for the mastering of which we should be all the better prepared by marking, learning, and digesting the comparatively a-b-c tasks that teach us how to live.

The wife of a friend of my own is a great favourite among all her husband's cronies. On being asked by what means she had won her popularity, she replied: 'I feed the men well.' A wise though simple answer, and worthy of consideration. As a moral institution, dinner cannot be too highly valued. A Hungarian is a chivalrous and romantic being; but chivalric sentiment requires nutritious diet; and a Magyar, in marrying, will inquire narrowly into the culinary abilities of his intended. A German maiden, after the trifles of intellectual training have been laid aside, is occupied for two profitable years in the higher departments of cookery and housekeeping. What a geological cycle of progressive civilisation lies between the clammy dough out of which a statuette might be moulded and the brittle films that melt upon the tongue like flakes of lukewarm snow! A

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man may talk scandal or write satiric criticism before dinner; may crawl like a horse-fly over the character or the writings of a neighbour, and settle greedily upon sore places; but, when he shall have well eaten and drunken, the devils of vituperation and disparagement are gone out of him, and his diaphragm is pleasantly titillated by the invisible spirits of Good-fellowship and Philanthropy. And not only is fasting an enemy to the merriment of the good-humoured, but it is churlish even to the sorrowful of their luxury of tears; for, when the stomach is empty, the heart may be full, but the eyes perforce are dry. So that hunger is inimical to cheerfulness and sympathy, which twain have important work to do in rearing the complicated fabrics of our happiness and virtue.

We are all aware how food influences industry and valour. An English navvy will in continental countries receive double wages, because his meat diet enables him to work double tides. A French general has acknowledged that deficiencies in their commissariat had much to do with the defeat of the Austrians at Austerlitz. If the conditions of all victories, ancient and modern, could be rigidly investigated, we should

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doubtless be amazed to find what an important part in the destiny of empires has been played by the gastric juice. But, while soldiers, sailors, and labourers must feed well to work well, they will recompense their work with pleasure, instinctively obedient to a law of nature; and the business of their commanders and employers is to divert the instinct, instead of seeking, and vainly seeking, its obliteration. Where limited numbers of men are hedged off from the world, as with a crew on a long voyage, or a garrison in a foreign land, the necessity for cheerfulness as a conservatrix of health is seen and acknowledged; and games, theatrical and other, are set on foot to dispel ennui and push off disease. What is true of little communities is true of the populations of hamlets, towns, cities, and nations. The good and wise king who wished his peasants might never lack a chicken for the pot knew how antagonistic are hunger and misery to order and progress. What is true of communities of men is true of boys at school.

There are several causes now in action that operate against the healthy spread of cheerfulness. The active members of our communities

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are too eager in early life to store up conventional knowledge; too intent in manhood upon the acquisition of wealth; and we are all too jealous at all times of our own special dignity and social status. The same narrow selfishness that actuates us in the pursuit of knowledge and wealth, in the maintenance of petty social privileges, corrodes our best spiritual efforts and yearnings. We turn Heaven into a bourn of egotism. We make of life a maze. Unless you be favoured with the clue, you may run your head continually against an opposing hedge; not, I hold it, to the pleasure of celestial onlookers. *We are too prone to forget*, if we ever remarked, *that the records of the Divine Life are mainly filled with the details of physical well-doing*. Our modern introspectiveness, our unwholesome and insincere disparagement of mirth and pleasure, our debasement of the epithets, originally and really innocent, 'sensual' and 'sensuous,' is a relic less of Christian than of Hellenic teaching. Not of genuinely Greek teaching; for the Greeks, as a people, were altogether free of this malady, and their livers appear to have been singularly healthy. But it was from amongst this wholesome-minded,

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outward-looking, open-air race that came Plato, the most splendidly unwholesome or most unhealthily splendid of all great thinkers, the most morbid of all introspective self-anatomizers. He was the first to diagnose spiritual maladies upon the plan adopted by Mongolian doctors in physical disease,—the examination and analysis of excretions. A good plan, viewed as an auxiliary. Not a pleasant one, viewed anyhow. The effect of Plato upon the world of thought has been twofold, like that of wine, spirits, and tobacco in the physical world ; he has scattered abroad much of mental pleasure and profit, and an incalculable amount of spiritual mischief. The purest type of Greek intellect was Aristotle, who was, of all the teachers of the ancient world, the greatest intellectual benefactor of his species. The preaching of Plato may be likened to the effects of opium or hachish, and the teaching of Aristotle to the invigorating properties of sea-bathing, open air, regular exercise, wholesome diet, and quinine.

But to revert to the first mentioned of our prevalent errors,—the undue stress laid upon early mental cultivation. It is quite true—and pity 'tis, 'tis true—that the vast majority of our

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children learn little or nothing; but such as are taught are usually taught too much. To achieve success in class or the examination-room too often requires exhaustive preparation. I remember to have been ordered to bed four days before an examination-day; and I am almost sure that the timely rest on that occasion saved me a brain-fever. Only recently I had to unite with two of my colleagues in desiring a youth of rare abilities and attainments to quit his papers and seek repose for a day or two on or near the pier at Kingstown. Within the last few days I have heard, to my extreme sorrow, that one of my most promising and industrious pupils has from over-study been seized with a strange ocular weakness which will render reading to him impossible for, probably, the space of a year. And yet he is said to be, to all outward appearances, in the best of health. So much are the brains and nerves of professional men overtasked by the exertions entailed by the universal desire for wealth and the daily increase of competition, that slowly but perceptibly the very symptoms and remedies for disease are changing. Our fevers, I am told, are running all to a low typhoïd type; and men are continually sinking down

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in the noonday of life from a mysterious lack of vital force. Even so out of life, but a very few months ago, sank that genial humorist, that exquisitely imaginative poet, that good and unassuming and simple-hearted man, my dear friend, Alexander Smith. But he fell a victim not to selfish ambition, but to the petty calls that press imperiously upon a man of narrow means and wide tender sympathies. He worked for bread, and achieved fame. A great gain. But in winning fame he lost life. And the price to me and to all that loved and love him seems too great, too great.

Whilst, then, enlightenment is needed for the ignorance amongst us, and creature comfort for our misery, we should put, as it were, a safety-valve upon our covetousness and mental ambition. The vice and the error are very often in inferior natures closely related. The youth who presses forward to academic distinction for ambition's sake alone, too often is, miser-like, accumulating hoards that he will never either enjoy himself or communicate to others. The stress upon our youths might easily be lightened by academic examiners coming frankly and sensibly and good-hu-

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mouredly to a general agreement to set fewer books and easier papers. Merit and originality would be as easily and surely tested as before, and at less cost of material to examiners and examinees. As it is, in very many cases difficult papers are printed more for the public than for students. They are clap-trap advertisements of fictitious attainments. These are occasionally thrown by members of one university in the teeth of members of another. I seldom peruse a course of university examination-papers without feeling thankful that I am not likely to be ever again called upon to answer the like, and wondering whether the proposers of the questions could answer satisfactorily one in three of their own questions. An acquaintance of my own, at the close of his undergraduateship in a renowned university, obtained the highest prize for mathematical acquirements by answering *one half of one number out of a paper containing twenty questions.* It was said, I believe without exaggeration, that the paper would have furnished matter for serious and prolonged study to the most advanced mathematicians in Europe. It would appear to me that the duty of an examiner were to leave

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at home the trumpet of self-glorification, and, instead of bewildering and humiliating an examinee, to elicit by a searching but not exhaustive process the proofs of his actual acquirements.

Until of late years Latin and Greek were the only disturbing elements thrown in to confuse a child's faculties, and prevent his obtaining a thorough grip of the intricate spelling and somewhat puzzling grammar of his own tongue. French and German are now extensively employed to make an Irish stew of a boy's linguistic powers. When once a pupil has thoroughly mastered his own language so far as to write correctly from dictation, to parse his words, and analyse moderately complex sentences, he may then, if he can afford the time, be set with safety upon the study of alien tongues, provided only that he be never in one year set to commence with more than one. But, after all, linguistic attainments may be valued too highly. I would advocate the study of Italian as a preparation for that of Latin, chiefly because it would eventually lessen rather than increase the total amount of difficulty to be overcome. But I would advise a young classical student to defer, if possible, the study of German

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and French, until he were at least thoroughly conversant with the leading difficulties and idioms of the two ancient tongues. Under any circumstances, the study of a modern language is, as a mental process, utterly valueless, if it be confined to the inculcation of right accent and the increase of vocabulary. A boy is only infinitesimally wiser than he was before, when he has ascertained that *chien* means *dog*, and that *qu'est-ce que c'est que ça* is pronounced *keskesaykesah.*

A well-taught English boy in an upper-school has often, to my own knowledge, carried away French prizes from intelligent boys either born in France or accustomed to daily familiar converse in French. I have also known cases where the leading prizes in French and German have been monopolized by leading prize-holders in Latin and Greek, although amongst their competitors have been lads whose linguistic studies had been confined almost entirely to the modern tongues. I think that, in regard to modern languages, a lightening of boys' loads might be made, by either deferring them until late, or by *allowing them a full systematic grammatical course by themselves.*

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Again, as a rule, our boys are kept with their noses too long at routine grindstones. I have never known a great school to be supplied with a library worth the name. No single school of repute should be without a very extensive and interesting one. *Any school numerously attended could, in the course of five years, supply itself with one by imposing a trifling matriculation fee upon every entrant to go towards the purchase of books.* A library so purchased should be superintended by a committee consisting *almost entirely* of boys. If the school hours extended from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., at least two hours should be allowed for thorough amusement or relaxation; and a pupil should be left to choose for himself between the library and the play-ground.

It would be an absurdity to stock the former only with didactically instructive books. Not a novel should be omitted that tended to illustrate history or to point a moral lesson. Of course, such novels as are written only with the view of exciting the nerves should be eschewed, upon the same grounds that we should refuse a child in his play-hours either a cigar to smoke or a brandy-flask to tipple. The most diligent catering should be employed to furnish children of

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a reading turn with pleasant but not enervating, useful but not tedious, literary food; and no teacher conversant with boy-nature would crowd his shelves with books whose spiritual lessons, however beautiful in themselves, were hopelessly in advance of puerile tastes and faculties.

It is the greatest possible mistake to suppose that a boy is necessarily idle when in the playground. He is so, if he loll against the wall, or saunter with his hands in his pockets, and churlishly refuse to join companions in a lively game; and a physically healthy boy detected day after day in such idle and selfish habits should be punished over a considerable period by being set to special tasks when his comrades have been dismissed for the day. But the lads that unite together for a hearty game of ball or cricket are healthily at work in body, mind, and spirit. They are oxygenating their blood, strengthening their nerves, quickening their apprehensions, and forming invaluable habits of good-temper, presence of mind, and self-control. Many writers have expressed of late years a fear that the love of play was becoming too absorbing with our English boys. For my own part, I am of opinion that a game is never too long for a set of lads,

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so long as the very great majority of them are heart and soul in the work before them; and that all games are healthy, when sufficiently amusing in themselves to dispense with the poisonous alien excitements of drink or betting.

In a previous chapter, I have given my experiences at the provincial and metropolitan schools of St. Edward's. At the former we were happily supplied with the *sine-quâ-non* of a green field; and it was due in part to this blessing, in part to our tender years, in part to the watchful care of our elders, *and in great part to the important fact that our numbers were large enough to excite enthusiasm, and small enough to ensure manageability*, that the tone of morality amongst us was generally satisfactory. At the metropolitan school we had three play-yards, of which one only had any claim to the epithet of spacious. As a blade of grass was an impossibility in the very heart of Nineveh, our games were very restricted in number and kind. The chief games, indeed, were calculated to brutalize the elder boys and break the spirits of the younger. The monotony of such games as we had, the dearth of light cheering amusement, the absence of all literary pleasures, the deaden-

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ing qualities of our ordinary studies, the lack of all educated feminine company, the social separation of master and pupil, the isolation of child from boy, and of boy from youth,—all combined to make our thousand lads as miserable, dull, *and immoral* a thousand as could have been found clustered together within a similar space in all Europe. I am far from being a rich man, and pecuniarily it would be to me a great boon to have my one son reared, clad, and instructed gratuitously on this wealthy, and, in intent, philanthropic foundation. *But, if I were twice as poor as I am, I would refuse the offer of a presentation, if it were made me to-morrow.*

I have seen enough of public-school men to know that vice of a secret and dangerous kind is too common at all our large isolated institutions. Such vice can never be combated by authority alone. *Unless the senior classes be in friendly league with their elders, it will work, unseen, unsuspected, its insidious perilous way.* But, from all I have heard, I think that the tone of our metropolitan St. Edward's was, in my time, lower than that of any other public school in England. Not a wall but was placarded with terms of a shockingly obscene slang; and not one of these

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unutterably filthy terms was, to all appearances, understood by beadle, superintendent, or teacher. We, the Hellenists, on one occasion, deliberated about calling upon the Head-master to make known the moral rottenness that was prevalent; but we were checked by the delicacy of the duty, the dread of responsibility, and perhaps by the feeling that to some extent our own characters, on the average, had not passed uninjured through the tainted atmosphere of the junior school.

I believe that many modes might be simultaneously adopted to purify a school thus vitiated; but I am convinced that the most effectual of all would be to introduce a more hearty and natural relationship between master and youth, youth and boy, boy and child, to lighten the hours of monotonous drill, to throw in a mixture of amusing and not uninstructive work, and above all to provide the means of sound, hearty, wholesome, invigorating, manly play. Until this at least be done, it will be chimerical to expect a healthy moral tone amongst a crowd of lads whose games, from necessities of locality, are in certain cases demoralizing, *and in all cases insufficient to exercise thoroughly their physical powers.*

The perfection of a school would be a day-

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school whose size would entitle it to the designation of public. Indeed, if England were properly supplied with schools, the instances would be rare where a lad were scholastically educated outside of his own county; beyond the reach of home memories; outside the influences of native air. Even such a day-school would require ample play-grounds and a well-stocked library, although its pupils would begin and end their day in their own homes. Some of them would, doubtless, be strangers from a distance; but we will suppose, for a school considered as perfect, that these latter would never be huddled together in boarding-houses so unwholesomely crammed as to exclude the possibility of some approach to domestic usages. If amusement, mental and physical, were requisite in so open an institution, how infinitely more should the need be felt in institutions walled in and sealed against the outer world, and under most favouring circumstances conveying, perforce, by their regulations, some dim associations of prison-life to their boy inmates!

I have spoken of a library as a necessary adjunct to every public school. A chemical laboratory is, perhaps, as essential. It would be well if great literary and scientific societies would

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assist neighbouring public schools in forming museums by supplying them with duplicates of books, engravings, and natural curiosities. Many a treasure might be contributed, also, by private gentlemen that cared more for the instruction of youth than the decoration of their chimney-pieces or drawing-rooms. Indeed, it is saddening to think what possible treasures in the way of pleasure and instruction giving are now mildewing on unseen walls or feeding the moth in unopened drawers! *If a library and museum were obtained, might we not press our demands still further, and beg for an efficient band-master and musical instruments, wind and string?* What next? What next?

Before a man leaves his home upon a frosty morning, he should lay in a stock of caloric by clothing himself in comfortable raiment, by taking a good substantial meal, and warming himself thoroughly at the fire; and similarly boyhood should be fortified against the hard work of after life by being timely charged with health, strength, and cheerfulness. Cold and Hunger open the windows to Disease, and Melancholy is too often the forerunner of Wickedness.

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XII.

MANHOOD AND THE WORLD.

'THERE be some ages when great things are a-doing, and others when great things are a-hatching:' says the immortal Busbequius Bungfungus in his exhaustive *History of the Universe.* At the close of the last century the former process was at work, and the latter process is at work now. We are in a condition of nervous suspense, like people waiting for the arrival of the post, the firing of a signal-gun, or the starting of a train. Not all, perhaps. Here and there we meet with a man wrapt in a mantle of enviable bigotry, and hugging old, comfortable, but unwholesome beliefs; and no small number are to be found of men eager for change for change's own sake, foolishly ungrateful to a laborious past, and foolishly trust-

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ful in an untried future. In things religious, political, social, we are equally perplexed. Some fear we are at the backyard of the world ; some declare we are standing on its outer threshold. Some say that we are drifting on to a lee-shore before the winds of scepticism and empiricism ; others, that we are moving out into deep waters. It is no time for rest. We must keep the lead heaving, and trust to a good look-out ahead, and Providence.

In mechanics we in England are said to be less original and inventive than our brethren in France and America, but to be quick at utilizing and improving upon alien ingenuity. An analogous relationship exists in regard to matters social and political. But, whilst French and American thought are continually and powerfully influencing us, we are continually asserting independence ; and, while we claim autocthonism for the trunks of our institutions, we steal tools from our neighbours to clip and trim the branches. The three great interconnected anachronisms of England are her mediæval educationalism, her Tudor church-government, and her hereditary legislation. The examples of the two great republics—for France is virtually a republic

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temporarily vulgarized by barrack-bureau imperialism—will gradually shame us into modifications. But we shall endeavour to conceal our indebtedness by proceeding to work awkwardly and fitfully. Common-sense will force us to borrow, and Pride will persuade us to repudiate the loan. And in the meanwhile we shall console ourselves for the humiliation of a compulsory self-improvement by directing attention towards, and dwelling upon, the weak points of our benefactors, and contrasting these with the best and wisest of our own institutions.

For some three centuries we have been making trial of a state church. We threw away certain advantages derived from universality of faith, with the view of securing certain others dependent on isolation. We cramped ourselves in matters of religious sympathy, that we might stretch our limbs at ease in matters political. Our new ecclesiastical swathings conduced, in England and Scotland, to the cure of our lameness, and, with an ingratitude leavened with common-sense, we are now anxious to throw some at least of our bandages away. Not that we are an unbelieving, scoffing, materialistic genera-

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tion ; but that we are hungering for a food not given us. The world of thought is altered since the days when a Bible was chained to the parish pulpit, when the priest was intellectually all in all to his weekly hearers ; their newspaper, catechism, magazine, library. We seldom now-a-days leave a place of worship on a Sunday morning, but our women-folk and lads make depreciatory remarks upon the substance of the recent sermon. Such remarks proceed more often from disappointment than from irreverence. There is a consciousness within us all that the teaching of the sacred day is, as a rule, very far beneath the teaching of days secular. If this melancholy condition of affairs be suffered to continue, it can only result in spiritual anarchy and chaos. We cannot go on with impunity for another age with our heads in a bush. God and man will observe us—the One with pity, and the other with scorn. We can no more live on make-believe beliefs than on imitation bread. We must either turn our clergy into merely ministering Levites ; or, if they are still to be our teachers, they must learn before they presume to teach. The older of our two great Hebrew books is in itself a

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compendium of the literature of—the Hellenic race excepted—the most gifted people in the world's history. What should we think of a man that presumed to fill a Latin chair in an university, after perusing only selections from a few Latin authors through the medium of ever so able a series of English translations? Yet a similar presumption is shown by seven in ten of our young graduates that approach, with all the genuine temerity of a profound ignorance, the treasures of religion, philosophy, ethics, jurisprudence, poetry, and history contained in the old Hebrew scriptures. We need more of teaching and less of preaching, and more of silence than of either. We need an educated and comparatively unfettered as well as a moral and respectable clergy. *Perhaps, if the regular use of sermons were abated, religious knowledge would not diminish, and Christian charity would flourish more abundantly.*

There are four aristocracies—of Beauty, Birth, Wealth, Ability. No nature, however brutish, can be insensible to the charms of the first. It is the very puerility of affectation to disparage the dignity of ancient lineage. The advantages

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of Wealth are obvious. Ability has in times past been too often the cat's-paw of Birth and Wealth, but is now reasonably desirous to share profits with her old employers. Whilst the claims of Beauty to homage are universally acknowledged, the claims to precedence on the part of Birth, Wealth, and Ability, in cases where the three are dissociated, are conflicting, and liable for a while to conflict more and more with one another.

In feudal times, a noble, for a grant of lands, was bound in emergency to take the field with an armed following at the call of his sovereign. His military duties, however hazardous, were simple in kind, calling more for the exercise of dexterity, resolution, patience, decision, than for that of purely intellectual faculties. His share in legislation would usually be limited to guarding the privileges of his order against encroachment of the monarch from above, the ecclesiastic at his side, the burgher from beneath. When military tactics and legislative requirements were thus simple and confined, there was nothing unreasonable in the transmission of duties and privileges from father to son. But modern warfare is a difficult and intricate science, and

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modern state-policy is a science still more difficult, intricate, and complex. We no longer associate in our minds high military command with nobility of descent. It is true that occasionally the two are found in combination; but the whole history of our Indian empire and the incidents of the Crimean war have forced us to the conclusion that between the two there is no necessary and indissoluble connection. But, although we have allowed, without a murmur, almost without notice, our hereditary soldier to disappear from the stage, we cling fondly to the figment of hereditary legislation; and this, too, although such names as Pitt, Canning, Peel, Cobden, Bright, Gladstone, and Disraeli plead with a silent satire against us; although the members of our Upper House of Legislature have for the most part confessed ineptitude by absenteeism, and although within the last year we have seen a commoner proceed from the Lower House, where his abilities were kept in countenance and his influence was but very moderate, to the House of Lords, in which, ere his nobility was older than his hat, without effort on his own part or opposition from others, he divided influence and pres-

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tige with England's second earl and *pro tempore* Premier ;—

Τρὶς μὲν ὀρέξατ' ἰὼν, τὸ δὲ τέτρατον ἵκετο τέκμωρ.

Some few years ago the institution of life-peerages was suggested. It would be difficult to devise a more conciliatory scheme for reconciling the pretensions of self-made ability with those of prescription. The names of ancient houses would shine with all the more brilliancy, if in future such peerages alone were conferred. New things would hereby have grown old ere old things had died away. No Englishman conversant with the traditions of his country would view without sincerest regret the extinction of any historic name or title ; but no man with a keen sense of propriety or of the ludicrous can forbear to smile at mention of Napoleonic and Soulouquian marquisates—Arcadian both,—or at that of British stucco-noblesse, banker-barons, beer-baronets, and knights—not military, for here is congruity ; but knights—scientific, mayoral, aldermannic. Perhaps the acmè of absurd incongruity was reached when an enterprising and philanthropic Parsee merchant was invested with a title bearing reference to a civilisation already

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semi-obsolete in the western world, and presented with a coat of arms, which, maugre its elephants and bamboos, was as much in keeping with his country and his religion as would be the office of Gold-stick in Waiting with the character and antecedents of Garibaldi.

Whilst conventional ecclesiasticism is lagging behind the intellectual requirements of the age, and the legislative robes inherited by noblesse are hanging moth-eaten in dusty wardrobes, we have a spirit of exclusion working social mischief in every section of the community. We have labour scowling upon capital; we have commerce heedless of refining knowledge; we have professions scornful of trade; we have rank indifferent to plebeianism; and plebeianism now railing at, now fawning on, rank. We find unanimity only in the worship of material riches. It is quite conceivable that, in course of time, the pursuit of wealth might grow so keen amongst us as to obliterate the distinctive marks now jealously preserved between class and class, order and order. But the homogeneity thus achieved would be an amalgam of unutterable vulgarity. We must search diligently until we find some more ennobling instrument to assist us

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in the difficult but necessary task of reconciling antagonisms and harmonizing discords.

At present there are only two forces found capable of training men to habits of order and co-operation,—those of ecclesiastical and military discipline.

But the once general fellow-feeling of ecclesiastics is now limited and particularized. The priest abhors the parson, the parson is not over-cordial with the minister, and the minister has his own opinion of Erastian parson and mediæval priest. It is obvious, then, that the elixir of harmony we are in quest of cannot be looked for in the regions of theology and dogmatism.

The citizen-soldiers of antiquity were voluntary agents. If they fought at all, it was because they were urged to fight by feelings of hatred or the thirst of vengeance. The soldier in our own standing army has a fellow-feeling for a brother soldier in any similar service, against whom, however, he is ready at a moment's notice to move in hostility, mechanically obedient to non-military dictation. It would seem at first sight singularly paradoxical, that between no bodies of men there should exist so

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warm and general a mutual sympathy as is found between such as are set apart, as it were, for each other's destruction. The truth is, that *in the naval and military worlds there is no dissent.* There is no doubt as to the material efficacy of powder, shot, and steel; as to the moral efficacy of sobriety, punctuality, self-control, self-forgetfulness, and unquestioning obedience; and discipline is universally allowed to be the agency for developing these latter invaluable habits and qualities. The brotherly sympathy of soldier to soldier, sailor to sailor, would appear, then, to be founded, not upon a common element of destructiveness, but upon a common admiration for that principle of self-sacrifice which characterizes the true soldier and true sailor,—the abnegation of personal wishes for the prosecution of general ends.

No man enters upon a commercial career, but with the one definite object in view of becoming rich. And a man cannot attain to riches without the exercise of many secondary virtues and secondary talents. The judicious employment of riches once acquired calls into play the highest virtues of which man is capable. If wealth were sought only for unselfish ends, it

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were well if we all rushed on in quest of it; but we all intuitively feel that the pursuit is a perilous one.

A youth of ignoble nature may enter the army with the view of indulging a taste for idle amusement, or trivial but harmless social enjoyment. At all events, he is saved the peril of being put to seek money for money's own sake. A youth of fine faculties and high aspirations will, in a military career, grow gradually to merge selfish considerations in contemplating the innumerable interests with which he is indissolubly linked. For a young man entering upon life, with enough of means to gratify moderate tastes, and enough of sense and strength to withstand temptation, I know of no training that can compete with an ensigncy passed in a well-ordered regiment, or with some six years spent upon a well-officered man-of-war. I could wish that, in my own sphere of endeavour, we could steal something of the *esprit-de-corps*, the good temper, the brotherliness, the tendency to pull together, that characterize our countrymen, military and naval.

But it is obvious that, with all its virtues and pleasant qualities, the military element in society, while it may act to some extent as a moral

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regulator, can never act at all as a spiritually harmonizing power; it can only be as a fly-wheel on a great and complicated machine. The godlike task of enlightenment and unification was undertaken, erewhile, by the Church; and would have succeeded, but for a blunder made almost at the very outset, and persisted in to this very day from mingled motives of piety, fear, obstinacy, laziness, and stupidity. The early patristic teachers of Christianity very naturally exaggerated the value of chronological propinquity to the days of their Master. We are beginning to see that a man may stand so near a great and bright luminary as to be blinded, or at least dazzled, by proximity. They would furnish each his own special scheme of spiritual finality; we in the teaching, held sacred by us and them, see a nucleus eternal and immutable lying within externals elastic as human circumstance. They considered that a seal had been set upon human aspiration; and we, with a feeling of mingled sadness and modesty, are beginning to acknowledge that, in things spiritual, mental, social, and alas! even in things physical, we are still only in our rudiments; we profess only to be feeling our way in the lowermost folds of the cloud on which,

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as on a stool, are resting the feet of the Inscrutable. It has yet to be seen which creed will prevail,—that of rash, unreasoning, obstructive, dogmatic assertion and counter-assertion, or that of modest, unassuming, hopeful, charitable, progressive, undogmatizing inquiry.

Not very long ago I read in a public journal how a friend went to call upon an English bishop, Lord Auckland, and, after long search, found the noble, the truly noble, prelate in a little room, teaching writing and ciphering to a class of grown-up colliers. I have a certain wishy-washy sentimental respect for the very rank and life of our lay nobility. As an Englishman, I can no more divest myself entirely of the feeling than, as a mere mortal, I can divest myself of a belief in ghosts, a dread of spilling salt, and a disinclination to walk underneath a ladder. In fact, I am not very anxious to break down the bridge betwixt the present and a historic past. But I have a serious and profound reverence for spiritual nobility; and, were it not that pilgrimages have been a few centuries out of fashion, I would walk a mile or two bare-foot to stand bare-headed before an English noble that could

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thus set a money-seeking, rank-adoring, and canting generation so splendid a lesson of piety, kindliness, and common-sense.

Not very far from the spot where I am now writing—and I am now writing in the west of Ireland—an Irish Catholic bishop, not very long ago, was riding one morning on a road where little children were approaching a National School doorway. He flourished his whip, as a marshal would his bâton, and terrified the little scholars back to their miserable pig-shared cabins. He was no alien aristocrat; he was, like the little scholars, a son of the soil, autochthonous. These poor urchins, these unconscious innocent sinners, were on their way to learn how to read and write and spell from teachers *not of a heretical Protestant creed*, but from teachers unblest with ecclesiastical and episcopal sympathy. Their little souls were only recently discovered, *and that upon political grounds only*, to be in peril from lay orthography and secular slate-pencils. I have read the Gospels carefully in Greek and in the mother-tongue; but I can call to mind no single passage in which arithmetic is objected to by the Saviour. I know that He spoke against evil feelings that come

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out of the heart. But, so far as I can recollect, He never objects to good and useful things entering the brain. At all events, the successor of the apostles, on this occasion, drove his little involuntary recusants back from the clean and ventilated den of mental improvement to their peat-smoked cabins of utterest ignorance, dirt, and semi-starvation. Had St. Paul been there to witness, how he would have wept—or anathematized! Had Democritus been an onlooker, how he would have roared with laughter!

A boy of eleven years of age, a Roman Catholic, was, within the last fortnight, in need of schooling in a city of western Ireland. On inquiry, his elder brother, not a stranger to myself, had reason to feel dissatisfied with the quality of instruction furnished at a school superintended by Catholic ecclesiastics. A school superintended by a Protestant clergyman was similarly sounded and abandoned. Last of all a Model School, *superintended by a Catholic layman*, was approached, and, whilst its classical instruction was found meagre and rudimentary, the humbler branches of writing, ciphering, reading, spelling, and English grammar were ascertained to be taught admirably well. The younger

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brother entered his name as a pupil, *and within a day or two his elder brother was excommunicated.*

Again; on each of the two last Sundays a *feu-de-joie* of episcopal denunciations was discharged over all Ireland. Bishops and priests read out from altars the names of such parents as had children in attendance at governmental schools, and threatened these parents with excommunication unless the children were immediately withdrawn. In other words, the citizens of a so-called free people were threatened with social and commercial isolation in this world and spiritual damnation in the next, if they should venture hereafter to purchase secular knowledge in the best and cheapest and nearest market.

Let us incidentally remark that if such denunciations were delivered from a communion-table by a bishop in England, and allowed to pass without an energetic and immediate protest from his order, the Episcopal bench would be washed away by a sudden flood of indignation, and within a very few years you would as easily light upon a native bishop as on a native elk.

But *revenons à nos moutons.* The Mondays in these Irish cities were holidays to every one of these children; were the preludes to a

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long vacation. Heaven only knows how long and how fraught with mischief this vacation may be to them! However—God be thanked! —their parents are not excommunicated. Lucky parents! What does it matter that their little ones should grow up in idleness and ignorance, should in after-life be pushed to the wall by the thrift and industry of the Englishman, the cultivation and energy of the Scot? What does it matter? What are the odds so long as you are happy?—A mocking echo seems to answer: 'You are happy! happy!! happy!!!'

Reader, I trust sincerely that the recital of these melancholy incidents has stirred within your breast some feeling of indignation at ecclesiastical tyranny, of contempt for laic servility. And yet, strange to say, I am bound by the Genius of Fair-play to interpose, and endeavour to moderate the very feelings which the recital of the above facts cannot but move in the hearts of all that love liberty and enlightenment. The sad truth is that this ecclesiastical tyranny is but the natural product of iniquity and foolishness elsewhere. These imperious prelates are acting without justifiable reason, *but not without provocation.* They are

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the hierarchs of an old and venerable form of Christianity, the creed of seven in ten of their countrymen. This creed has been insulted for centuries by an ascendency, favoured by Government, of the church of a wealthy and powerful minority. The greatest academic institution in their country is expressly bound by its charter to antagonism with the religion of the land. Here and there National Schools, supported by funds raised from public sources, from Christians of all denominations, have been indirectly but dishonestly used by foolish members, not always female, of aristocratic Protestant houses for the purpose of tampering with the faith of little Catholic scholars. A system of proselytism, unprecedented in European history, and unparalleled in its weakness for good and strength for mischief, is carried on by Protestant missionaries in the western districts of Ireland, where almost all the gentry, the members of professions, and tradesmen belong to the old form of faith. And in these districts, thus insolently plagued, these Protestant missionaries — not personally, but officially — are regarded with detestation by every single educated *laic* Protestant. These missionaries do not confine their

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ministrations within the legitimate bounds of consecrated buildings, or prosecute a fair polemical strife in book or pamphlet. They are authorized by their society *to placard the walls of towns and villages with large papers resembling playbills*, on one of which I have known a commandment to have been advertised as 'Lost, Stolen, or Strayed,' and on another of which I have seen *Catholicism contrasted with Christianity*, and thereby indirectly but obviously identified with Heathenism. Not one of these indecent placards but will contain, usually in large staring capitals, some words or expressions calculated to wound acutely the feelings of a devout Catholic. This wretched system, not of *bonâ fide* proselytism,—for it is confessedly an utter failure in the business of conversion,—but of sectarian provocation, is abetted, not credulously abetted, by an archbishop, many bishops, many noblemen, and innumerable other old ladies, Irish and English. My assertion as to failure is only partially grounded on the following one fact. *The wife of a Protestant clergyman, who had been engaged on the 'Irish Church Mission' for some ten years from its commencement, stated to an intimate friend of my own that not one single con-*

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version based upon conviction had ever been made to her knowledge and satisfaction. I think that, if I were an Irishman and a Catholic, I should feel somewhat sore with a government that favoured a church in Ireland, which, with the view of winning the political support of English Evangelicism, supported a mischievous and demoralizing crusade against the religion of my poorer countrymen, abetted neophytes in preaching against my mother as a heathen, and in outraging the holiest feelings of my own nature. But for all that, I should not be disposed to wreak my vengeance on that government *by not allowing my children to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic.*

The subject, then, is not one for indignation, unless the feeling be impartially directed against wrong on either side; nor for contempt, for there is too much cause for pity in the matter when rightly probed; nor for laughter, for that on so serious a subject were Satanic; nor for tears either, for tears may work off our own sadness, but their shedding is of little use to our fellows. There is an infinity of wretchedness, poverty, idleness, and ignorance in our midst. A circle described with my present resi-

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dence as centre, and with a radius of one mile in length, would comprehend thousands of poor that live upon a vegetable diet, that are housed with swine, that are clothed in rags, that cannot write an intelligible word, that cannot read a daily journal, that have a miserably limited vocabulary of words, that understand us only when we speak of local facts or special incidents, that have no chronology, no history, no theology, —except in words—no earthly hope in the future; but—for I now repeat that I am writing in the west of Ireland—in their hearts a melancholy, and perhaps a vengeful, brooding over a traditionally and onesidedly recorded past.

What remedies are we to apply ?

For my own part, I am full of reverence for the religion of action at all times ; and for doctrinal theology I can feel due respect at right times and in proper places. But with all my respect for religion and theology—two separate things, by the by,—I have the conviction in my heart and conscience that the missionary required now-a-days to upraise misery and enlighten ignorance is the commonplace secular schoolmaster. We have tried metaphysical dogmatism, and failed. We have endeavoured to rear a spiritual fabric

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upon a basement of intellectual ignorance; to build, as it were, a palace of porphyry upon a treacherous and filthy foundation of slime, refuse, and excremental uncleanness. *Let us begin afresh; and begin at the beginning.*

Not many years ago Sir Robert Peel with other liberal statesmen introduced into this poorly educated island a broad and national system of scholastic and academic education. For a while the Catholic priests were in ecstasies of delight, and only the partisans of the old Establishment were down-hearted and moody. After a while, it was becoming apparent that the old Protestant ascendency and monopoly were doomed. The antagonistic hierarchy determined to make a struggle for ascendency in their turn, and their recent tactics have been to deal with educationalist statesmen as Alexander of Russia dealt with Napoleon the First. They only differ in this respect from the Czar, that this latter made a wilderness of his country to save himself and it, and our priests are making a wilderness of Ireland to raise their own order *and, at the expense of all around them, their own order alone.* If an ecclesiastical ascendency of some kind or other be a good thing, the old estate should be con-

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tinued, and Irishmen should remember the providence of the fox who discouraged a friend when offering to comb off old parasites. 'Nay:' said Reynard: 'the old ones are full of my blood, and lazy; but, if they be removed, new ones will come, who will all be empty and hungry.' European history surely should have taught us all that a priest may do us good service at the desk, in the pulpit, or by the bedside, but that his presence in the schoolroom is apt to stop the clock, and his interference on the hustings to break the main-spring.

The national secular system of education in Ireland is said by some of its enemies to sap the morals of its pupils, by others to uproot their nationalism, by others to undermine their faith. It might with equal reason be said by one and all *to impede the action of their livers, kidneys, and digestive organs.* Catholic servants, male and female, spend years together under Protestant roofs, and their nationality and religion remain intact. Until within some twenty years, it was not uncommon for such domestics to attend morning and evening *Protestant* prayers. Did these prayers convert them? 'I have listened to yer prayers for ten years:' said a

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coachman to a friend of mine: 'and the divil a bit of harm they ever did me.' If an illiterate peasant remains for years and years contemptuously uninfluenced by the subtle influences of domestic life, is it likely that an educated Catholic youth will be diverted from his maternal faith by the scientific or literary instruction of a man that is bound by oath not to interfere with his religion, and who, without the binding of an oath, would never dream in honour or in inclination of overstepping the limits of strict professional engagements; who would as soon think of stealing a dogma out of the conscience of a student as of picking the handkerchief from his pocket?

In reviewing the condition of the three great divisions of the Britannic commonwealth, we find Scotland industrious, educated, and prosperous; England industrious and prosperous; and Ireland, for the most part, idle, uneducated, discontented, and unthriving. In Scotland the schoolmaster has achieved marvels. His beneficent work, within the last fifty years, in the schoolroom and the public press,—for an able journalist is, in effect, a schoolmaster of men,—has conduced very greatly to tone down re-

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ligious and national prejudice, and pave the way towards a broad and catholic treatment of religious questions, and an imperial as opposed to a provincial estimate of high national interests. In England there are anomalies sufficient to supply us with an essay of antitheses. But whatever may be her religious, political, and social abuses,—and they are numerous enough, God knows!—there is no unsoundness in the heart of the people, no stagnation in the public conscience, no gulph hopelessly impassable between class and class, order and order, no cancer eating its slow way, and defying cure or mitigation. In Ireland we have two distinct races and languages. Before the country can be at peace, it is obvious that the two races must either amalgamate, *or that one must give place to the other.* Vigorous efforts were made by Elizabeth to bring about an union by the compulsory assimilation of creeds. The process of extermination was conceived and partially acted on by Cromwell. Religious proselytism, then, and physical force have signally failed as agencies for producing peace or tranquillity. *The only instrument remaining is that of sound mental instruction so administered as to clash with prejudices and opinions neither*

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political nor religious. It is true that politico-ecclesiastical leaders will oppose the spread of an universally-dispensed national education, on the ground that the importance of the contentious among them is based upon the troubles of the country; but ecclesiastics who love light more than darkness, peace before animosity, *who consider that patriotism is a part of our duty towards mankind, and that this latter is a very great part of our duty towards God,* will in no way hinder, even if they be afraid to aid, the enlightenment in secular knowledge of their countrymen. That statesman will be blessed by coming generations of Irishmen who shall make the schoolmaster in Ireland what he is in Scotland; who, in despite of Protestant ill-judged proselytism, of pig-headed anachronous Orange partisanship, of antiquated Ultramontane anti-national cabals, and—what is more formidable an impediment than all else put together—the too general indifference to improvement that dissensions and misgovernment in past times have left behind them, shall press forward unremittingly towards the mental and moral and social regeneration of this distracted people; shall, with a faith in the efficacy of sound

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knowledge, disregard threats and promises, and preach a practical lesson in sociology from the text: 'Let there be light!'

I conclude my last essay or reading with a special appeal, suggested by the backward condition of the island—and especially of the province—in which I live, and the leading rank in the civilised world held by the great people in whose second city I am now privileged to speak; and I would parenthetically observe that my title-page is so worded as to deprive my remarks, here and elsewhere, of any importance that might attach to them from my academic position.

The future of Ireland is intimately bound up for good or evil with the grave question of secular education; and the sound secular education of Irish youth is a matter of infinite importance to England and to America. These two great countries are both concerned in the question whether Ireland is to continue with an idle and illiterate gentry, with suicidally antagonistic ecclesiasticisms, with a poorly educated middle-class, and a wholly neglected peasantry, or whether her nobles are to be shamed and her peasants encouraged to mental

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self-improvement by the cultivation amongst the commercial classes of industrious habits and refining studies, by the formation, in fact, of what now is absolutely non-existent,—a rational, intelligent, educated, liberal public opinion. If ecclesiastics shall be encouraged by the timidity or the dishonesty of statesmen to foster idleness and ignorance in childhood, boyhood, and youth, there can be no reasonable grounds for anticipating future prosperity or peace for Ireland. And the troubles of Ireland disturb the relationship between England and America. And, when these latter twain are in ill humour with one another, the great round world is out of sorts.

The wealth of a nation lies, as we have said, in the active brains, the honest hearts, and the hard sinews of her men; and the hope of a nation, in the intelligence, morality, and health of her boys and girls. The man that tampers with the education of children is the most insidious enemy of his country; he is putting his axe to the very root of her prosperity; he is blighting the seed on which the harvest is to depend. Ireland has now the pity of Europe, but pity is a feeling too often dashed with contempt. She must change that pity of others

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into admiration, and her own random impulsiveness into continuity of purpose and genuine self-respect. She must cease to lie abed in the morning, praying God and the Executive to boil eggs for her breakfast. Twenty years of patient self-denial and self-improvement would win for her something like what Hungary has won, and liberal Englishmen would cheer her on her brave and constitutional mission.

If there be an Irishman in America among my hearers or my readers that can view steadily the causes and the cure of his fatherland's unhappiness, can mingle patriotism with patience, and prefer sober feasibility to hideous nightmare chimera, such an one will give the weight of all his influence, his good word, his favouring sympathies, to the real unpretending lovers of his old country; the underminers of political ecclesiasticism, of obsolete political antagonism, of religious inequality; the lovers of that common Christian element that is found alike in the emotional Catholicism of the Irishman, the logical Presbyterianism of the Scot, the socio-political Episcopalianism of the Englishman, but the enemies of what in the first is the reflex of hatred towards England, of what in the second is but the

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